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Spring 1987
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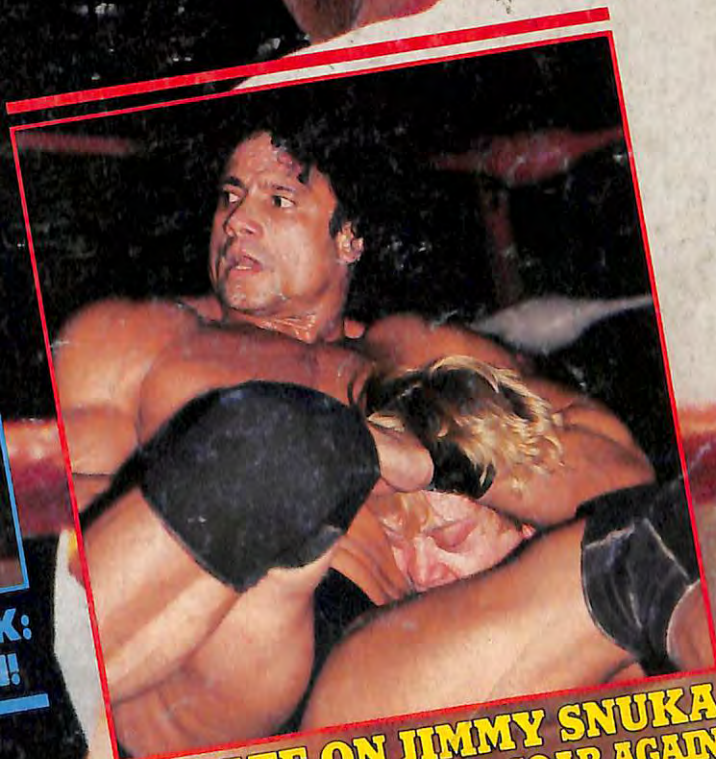
Wrestler

ANNUAL

**WARNING TO
HULK HOGAN:**
IF YOU TRUST ROWDY RODDY,
YOU'LL PAY THE PIPER!



**HE BENDS BUT HE WON'T BREAK:
RIC FLAIR CANNOT BE BEATEN!**



**UPDATE ON JIMMY SNUKA:
THE SUPERFLY WILL SOAR AGAIN!**

BOBBY HEENAN: "BOCKWINKEL IS NOTHING WITHOUT ME!"
**THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF
MIKE VON ERICH**



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SKINNY ISN'T ATTRACTIVE

If you don't think so, just watch what turns women's heads on the beach. They get turned on by well-built guys. They're the ones with the prettiest girls. It's a rare fellow who doesn't want to look good in his clothes and is happy with a skinny frame, who has not envied men who weighed a little more, had a better appetite and generally displayed a physical fitness that spoke of health and well-being. True, while doctors and nutrition specialists warn against being fat, very little is said about the equal or greater evils of being underweight. So there's more to it than cosmetic aspects. Skinny is not only unattractive. It is also unhealthy. Gaining weight could mean gaining health for you.

GAIN STAMINA AND SELF-CONFIDENCE TOO.

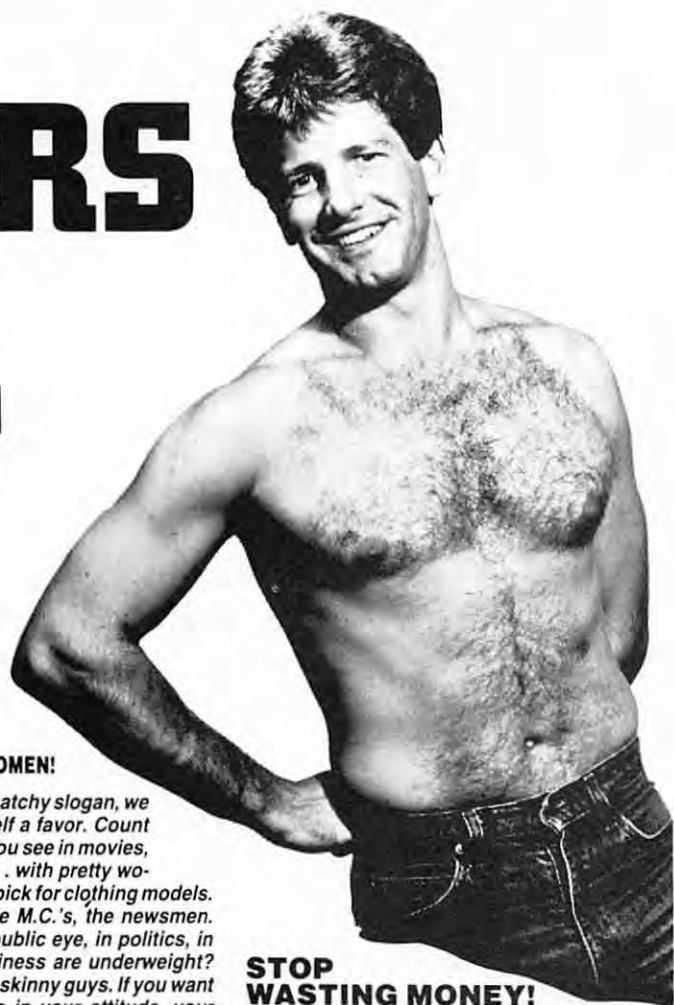
Skinny men are not great lovers. That's a known fact. Add a few pounds and you'll be amazed how it will improve your love-life. Women know this and are conscious of the fact that skinny men can't go the distance. The race is to the strong, the saying goes. And the fellow who is handsomest doesn't look like a stand-in for the family skeleton. Many a man found that gaining a few more pounds has helped him overcome chronic illness, major or minor. Many a doctor has prescribed gaining weight. But so little is publicized about skinny men. The great amount of publicity given to coronary problems has brought the bulk of weight attention to those men who weigh too much. Men who weigh too little never really get equal time. But their problem is no less serious.

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*If you think that's just a catchy slogan, we hope you will do yourself a favor. Count how many skinny men you see in movies, or on TV or anywhere . . . with pretty women. Notice whom they pick for clothing models. See the announcers, the M.C.'s, the newsmen. How many men in the public eye, in politics, in leadership roles in business are underweight? Not even astronauts are skinny guys. If you want to experience a change in your attitude, your business progress, your lifestyle, see what 5, 10, 15 pounds can do for you. See how it adds to your personal esteem, your confidence and, best of all, your well-being. Your day will come . . . and thank your lucky stars, it's within sight with *ShapeUp* working for you.*

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Address _____
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Forging through the mail



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INTRODUCTION

WITH THE NEW YEAR still so young, it's a good time to look back to 1986 and the years behind it. And that's just what *Wrestler Annual* is all about. Once again, we proudly present a retrospective of the best articles from the world's oldest wrestling magazine, *The Wrestler*.

Before he came to the WWF, Bobby Heenan was the most successful manager in AWA history. And Heenan's greatest achievement was managing Nick Bockwinkel to the AWA World title back in 1975. But it wasn't long before a rift developed between the two, and Heenan fired his manager. **Bobby Heenan: "Bockwinkel Is Nothing Without Me"** (from *The Wrestler*/October 1976) was the manager's response to being bounced by his top protege. The two got together again soon after this story was published, only to finally split up again a few years ago. By the way, Bockwinkel's record *without* Heenan managing him is considerably better than when "The Brain" was calling the shots.

Perhaps the best wrestler you never heard of is Canada's mammoth Angelo Mosca. Despite attaining a terrific won-loss record throughout the years, Mosca never attained the stardom he felt he deserved. Some blamed this on bad career moves, but others had a different opinion. **Why Has The Press Avoided Angelo Mosca?** (November 1976) shows just how powerful the print medium can be. It can tear down presidents or make superstars.

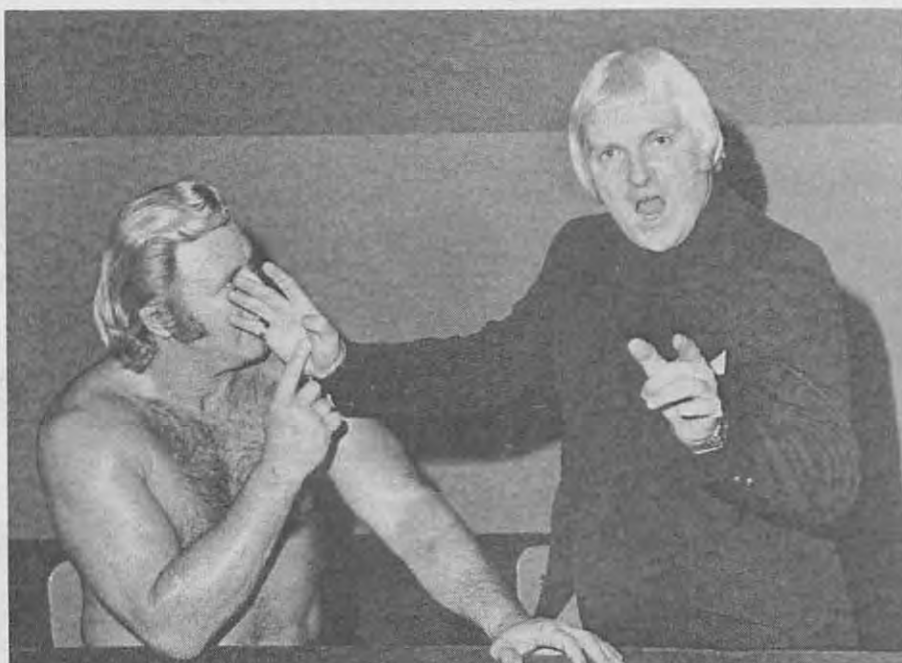
There are comebacks and there are comebacks. But what Mike Von Erich did in 1986 was far more than merely coming back from an injury. Von Erich literally came back from being close to death. **The Triumphant Return Of Mike Von Erich** (November 1986) was perhaps *The Wrestler's* most inspirational story ever. Read it again, and revel in the sometimes mystical powers of a human being.

Today's most popular wrestler is Hulk Hogan. But for you newer fans of professional wrestling, this story will introduce you to a man who a few years ago was as loved as Hogan

is today. Tommy Rich lit up the wrestling landscape like a wildfire, which, fittingly enough, was also his nickname. And like a wildfire, Rich also burned out of control and for only a very short period of time. Our next story was published in the early days of Tommy's incredible career, long before he disappeared from the wrestling mainstream. **Is Tommy Rich As Good As They Say?** (October 1978) asked a question that was soon answered with a thumping "yes." By the way, today Tommy is in the



Former NWA World champion Tommy "Wildfire" Rich—who's on the comeback trail—headlocks Ivan Koloff. Just a few short years ago, Rich was as popular as Hulk Hogan is today.



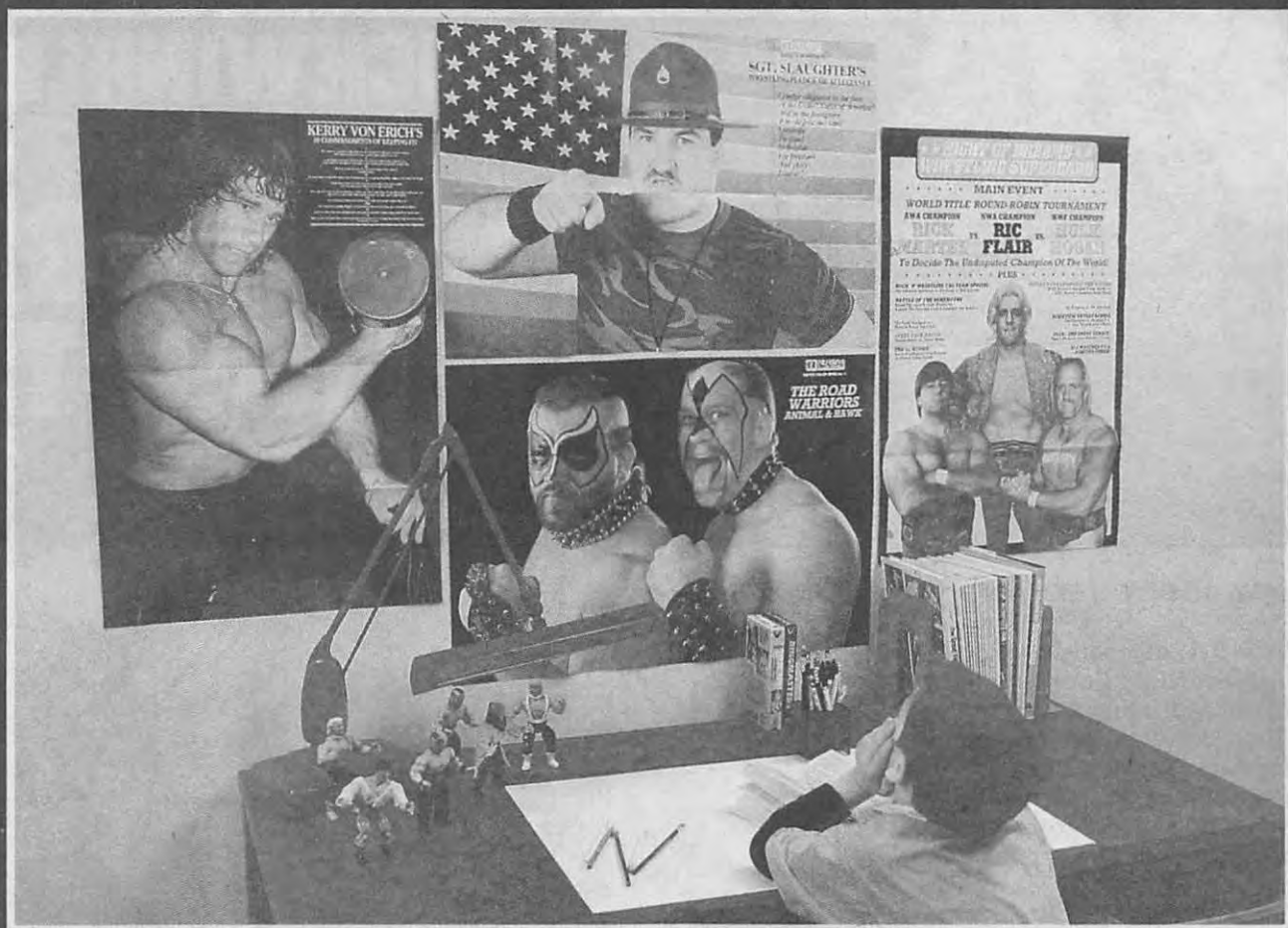
Bobby Heenan, looking much younger, interrupts Nick Bockwinkel to make a point. Heenan managed Bockwinkel to the AWA title back in 1975.

midst of a successful comeback in the Deep South area, where he again is wrestling in front of vocal and sold out audiences. Maybe we will again be warmed by Wildfire.

Nobody hungers for the NWA title more than Dusty Rhodes does. This is true today, it was true last year, and it was true eight years ago. Back in 1979, *The Wrestler* gave The American Dream some unsolicited

(Continued on page 63)

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BOBBY HEENAN: "BOCKWINKLE IS NOTHING WITHOUT ME!"

BY BOBBY HEENAN

BY NOW, everyone knows how great Nick Bockwinkle is. There really is no need for me to go into that. However, very few people realize Nick Bockwinkle would be nowhere if it wasn't for me.

Now that the controversy surrounding Nick's title match with Verne Gagne has finally died down, it's time for me to tell the world how it was done. You see, Nick and I sat down several days before the match. We worked out most of the strategy he was going to use against Gagne. Most of the ideas were mine, and I carefully taught him how to put them into actual use.

With such a brilliant plan worked out, there was no possible way for Verne Gagne to win that match. And look at the results of my labors: Nick is now AWA champion, and he is probably the best champion that association—or any association for that matter—has ever seen.

(Continued on page 10)



Here I am with MY champion, Nick Bockwinkle. I knew he'd win the AWA title. I mean, how could he miss with the brains of me, Bobby Heenan, on his side. I made Nick the superstar he truly is today.

Nick Bockwinkle is AWA champion. Is he really the king of his division or just a front man for the most reprehensible manager in wrestling? Bobby Heenan, his manager, thinks he knows the answer



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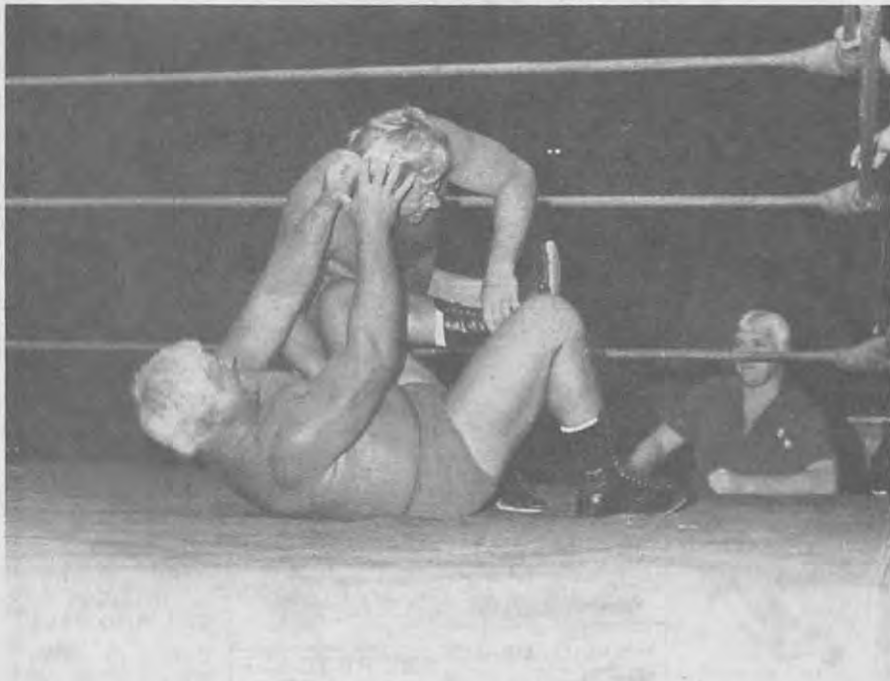
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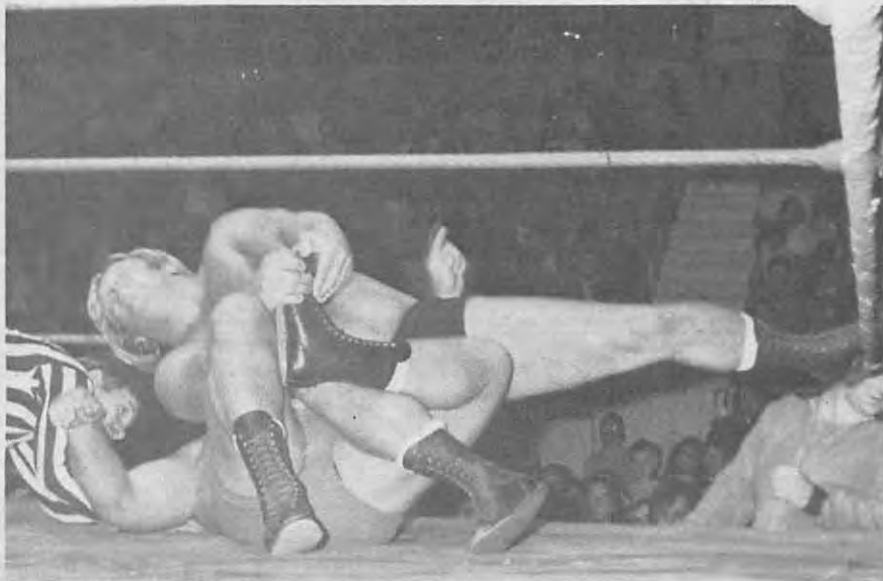
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BOBBY HEENAN

(Continued from Page 8)



Long before he became AWA champion, I was at ringside (above) to steer all of Bockwinkle's moves. My men all have to be masters of trickery. Although Nicky rarely uses tricks such as this (below), I demand he use them when his opponent has been cruelly fouling him.



When I first started working with Nick, he was still pretty wet behind the ears. It was obvious he had a lot of talent. He just didn't know how to put his talents to work for him. He would lose a lot of his matches because of this.

Then I started working with Nick, teaching him how to bring out his real talents. If I hadn't done this, he would probably have been thrown out of wrestling for losing every match. He has come a long way under my tutelage.

One of the most brilliant things I ever did was bring Nick together with Ray Stevens. As a tag team, that pair was practically unbeatable. Their defeat by Bruiser and Crusher was an accident—it couldn't be foreseen those two would cheat their way to the title.

All in all, the pair of Bockwinkle and Stevens was one of the greatest tag teams in wrestling history. They held the title longer than any other team. And do you know why? Because I was there advising them,

devising their strategies, and showing them the path to glory!

Nick and Ray were great together, and it is really a shame they were forced to split up. If they had been able to stay together, they would have won back their belts from Bruiser and Crusher. The only consolation was Nick's getting a shot at Verne Gagne's title.

Many people said Nick would only keep the AWA belt for a week or so. But I knew Nick would not lose the title. Before every championship match, I figure out a brilliant plan for defeating whoever it is Nick is slated to wrestle. In all modesty, I must admit all my planning has been fantastic; Nick still holds the belt.



Jealous of our success, Billy Robinson did this to us. We'll make him pay by seeing that he never gets another title shot!

However, Nick would not have been able to keep the belt a week if I had not been there to advise him and give him ideas for how to defeat any challengers to his title. Face it, Bockwinkle is nothing without me! He would just be another wrestling bum if I hadn't come along to help him become great.

A man can stay out of the spotlight just so long. It is now time for the world to acknowledge my greatness. It is time for everyone to recognize that without me, Nick Bockwinkle would not be AWA champion. I think I should be given the credit I so richly deserve for making Nick Bockwinkle into the greatest champion in AWA history.

And that is all I have to say. Without me, Nick Bockwinkle would be nothing. But fortunately, Nick Bockwinkle is smart enough to have the smartest manager in wrestling in his corner! □

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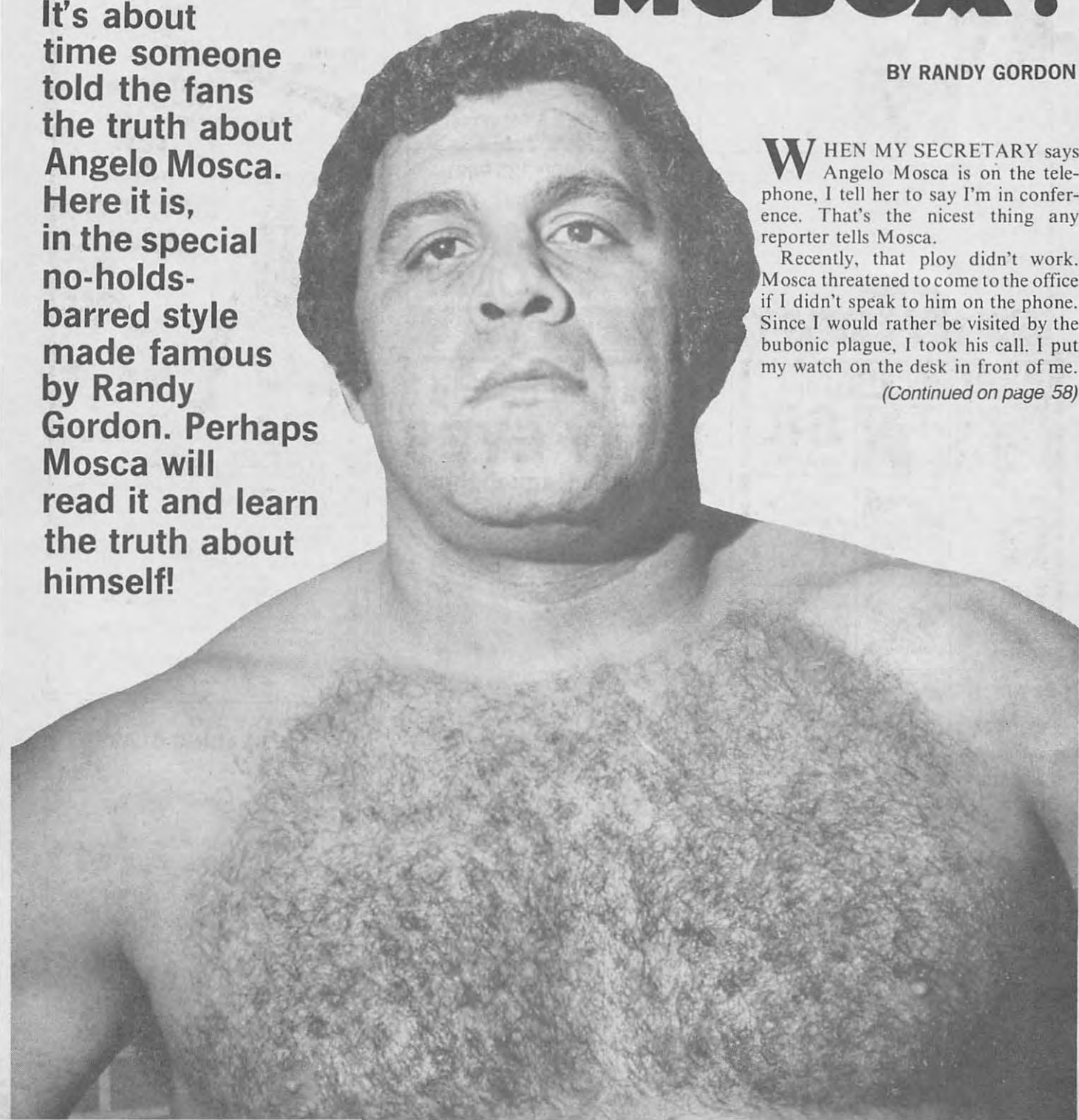
BY RANDY GORDON

It's about time someone told the fans the truth about Angelo Mosca. Here it is, in the special no-holds-barred style made famous by Randy Gordon. Perhaps Mosca will read it and learn the truth about himself!

WHEN MY SECRETARY says Angelo Mosca is on the telephone, I tell her to say I'm in conference. That's the nicest thing any reporter tells Mosca.

Recently, that ploy didn't work. Mosca threatened to come to the office if I didn't speak to him on the phone. Since I would rather be visited by the bubonic plague, I took his call. I put my watch on the desk in front of me.

(Continued on page 58)



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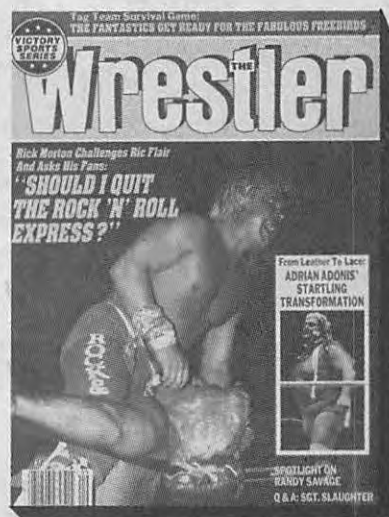
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THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF MIKE VON ERICH!

Nine months ago, he lay in a hospital room on the brink of death. Doctors said it was hopeless. Last rites had already been administered. But on the Fourth of July, Mike Von Erich completed his miraculous recovery from toxic shock syndrome and returned to the wrestling ring



Reunion at the Reunion: It was a touching scene in Dallas when Mike Von Erich was introduced to the fans after a nine-month layoff. Kevin, Mike, and Lance Von Erich are the World Class six-man tag team champions (above). Mike delivers a flying elbowdrop against Butch Reed (opposite page).

ON THE MORNING of July 4, 1986, Mike Von Erich got out of bed at 8 o'clock, just like any other day, quickly showered and got dressed, then made the short drive across town to have breakfast with the rest of his family. When he arrived, his mother Doris and father Fritz were already at the table, along with brothers Kerry, Chris, and Kevin, and cousin Lance.

This was a special day in the Von Erich household. It was the first time that they had all been together since Kerry returned from the hospital after his near-fatal motorcycle accident on June 4. And that evening, in Reunion Arena, Mike would wrestle for the first time since he was felled by toxic shock syndrome last October.

After the entire family exchanged

greetings, Mike sat down and Fritz said grace. Certainly, despite the great tragedies that had befallen them, the Von Erich family has retained its faith. Almost 25 years ago, brother Jack died when he accidentally electrocuted himself, and in 1984, David was found dead of acute enteritis in his hotel room in Japan. But the Von Erichs have their tender mercies to be thankful for. Mike could well have died from toxic shock syndrome and Kerry was, indeed, lucky to be alive.

As breakfast was served, the discussion turned to the events of that evening. This was to be the first time that Kevin, Lance, and Mike were wrestling together, and ironically they were defending the World Class six-man tag team championship against Matt Borne, Buzz Sawyer, and Butch Reed.

At this point it no longer mattered that only one of the three of them had been involved in the match in which Lance, Kerry, and Steve Simpson had won the title from The Freebirds. (Kevin, though injured and substituted for by Steve Simpson, was still given a share of the championship; Mike had replaced Kerry after the motorcycle accident).

"I think we'll be okay," said Mike, "but we'll have to tag out quickly. I haven't wrestled in ages and Kevin still isn't one hundred percent, so Lance might have to carry most of the load."

"That's fine with me, Mike," said Lance, "as long as the doctors say you're ready to wrestle. Remember, if you're not feeling up to it, I don't want you to play hero."

(Continued on page 48)

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ALACK OF experience can be very damaging to a young rookie. Not so in a case like this. Not so when the newcomer is young Tommy Rich. He shows us more knowledge of wrestling than many veterans.

A rookie to the world of wrestling has been known to do many reckless things. After five or six matches, they are expected to know what is going on and in most cases their recklessness disappears.

When Tommy Rich walked into the squared circle for the first time, no one would believe that he was a rookie. He knew exactly what was going on. He knew what to do at every moment. A lack of experience was certainly not his problem.

Tommy's eyes did not move off his opponent. From the first instant he entered the arena until the time he walked out, his eyes were squarely on his opponent. Is it possible that the human eye will not blink?

As he stood there waving to his fans (who took an instant liking to him) he stared at his man. Even as he signed autographs, his eyes never glanced down at the paper, they just looked straight ahead. It was as if he had hypnotized himself.

Tommy has proven himself in the wrestling world. He has been matched against some of the toughest grapplers around. He has not yet let his fans down. "I love wrestling and I love winning. I never plan to lose. I guess no wrestler ever plans to lose, but I really mean it. I won't lose!"

Many of the top promoters seem to think that Tommy's only problem is overanxiousness. "He probably won't last very long, not with that kind of attitude," said one promoter.

Yet, when asked, many of the scientific wrestlers said that he

has what it takes. "I am really happy to have Tommy as a member of our group of scientific wrestlers. It's great to see a young wrestler start out, especially one like Tommy, who knows what he is doing. I happen to think that he will

make it. He'll be around for a long time. In fact I think that this boy is championship material," said well-known wrestler, Tony Atlas.

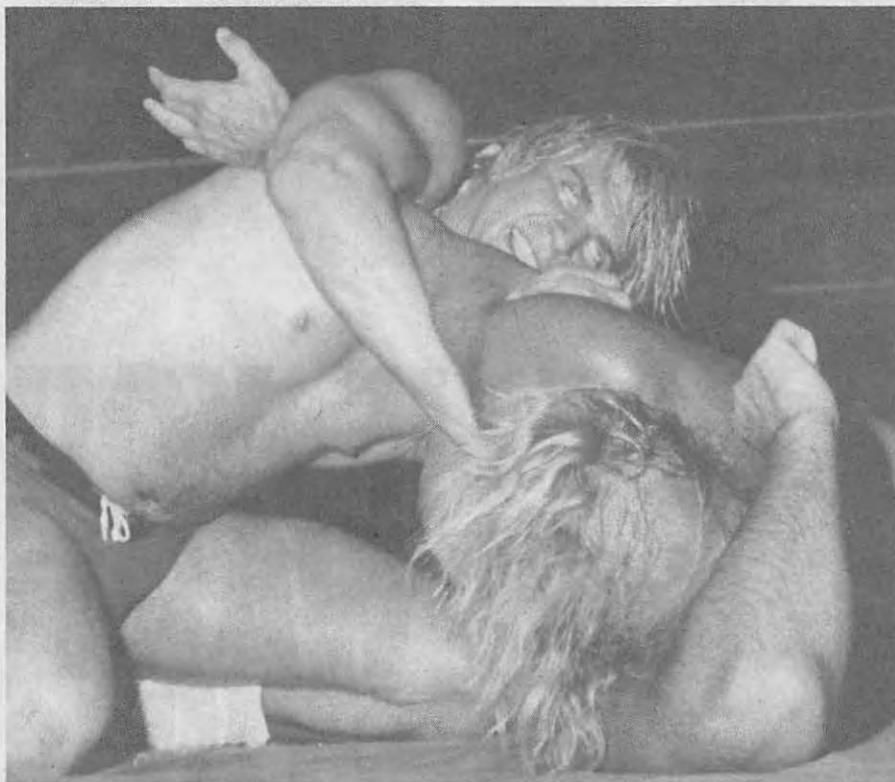
Aside from the promoters, who feel a bit skeptical of Tommy, the only ones who have



IS TOMMY RICH AS GOOD AS THEY SAY?

Is it too soon to tell or is Tommy Rich headed right to the top? Some people swear there is nothing Tommy can't do in the ring, yet others feel he is headed toward certain oblivion. Which will it be?

PHOTOS BY GENE GORDON



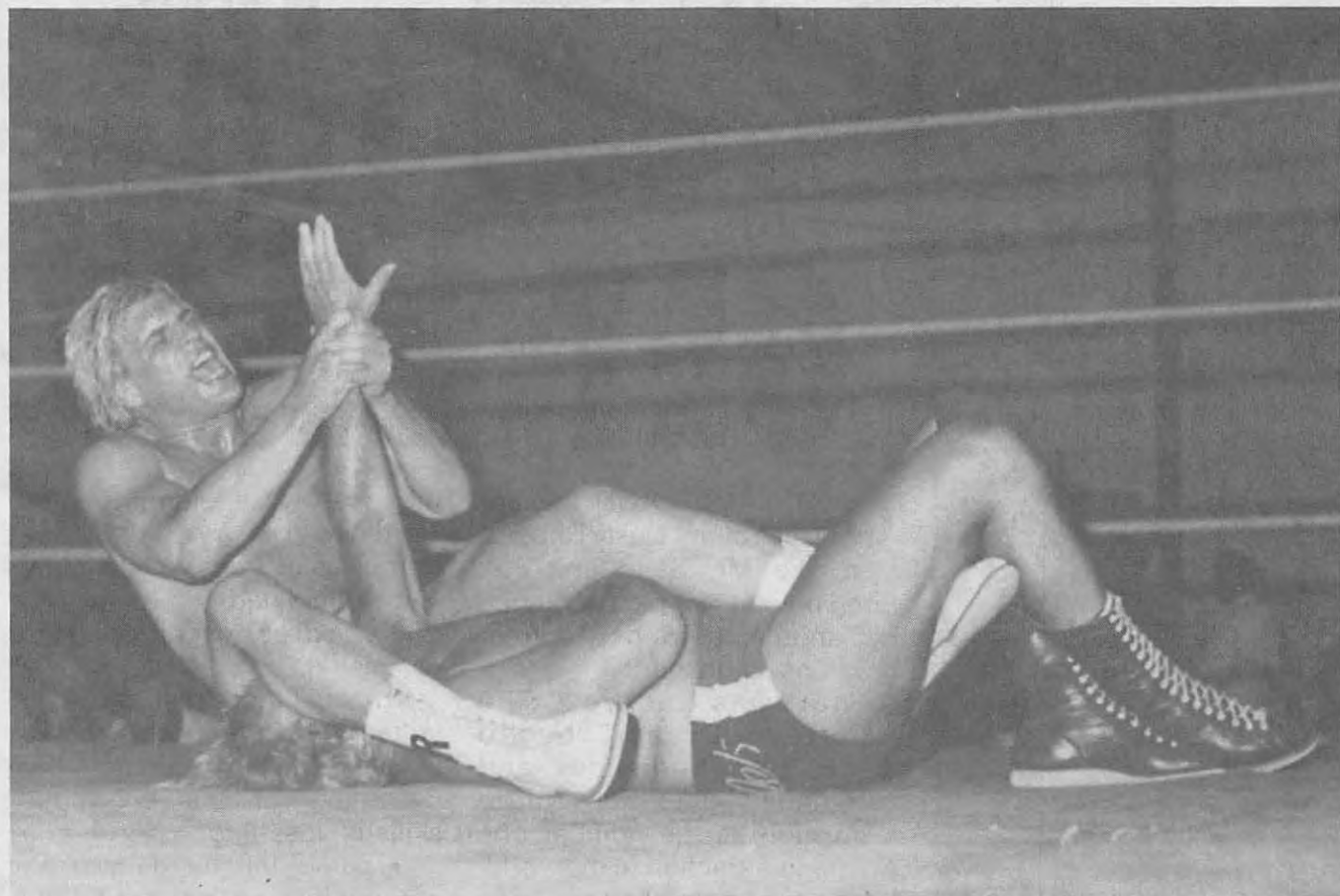
a feeling of hate for him are the rulebreakers. They just don't want him around. But why? Could they be afraid of Tommy? Do they think that he is so good that he may get rid of some of them? This is a possibility that can't be ruled out.

"That's a hunk of crapola," said Ric Flair. "It's just too crowded. We don't need any new young punks around here. Get out while you can before someone ends your career for good."

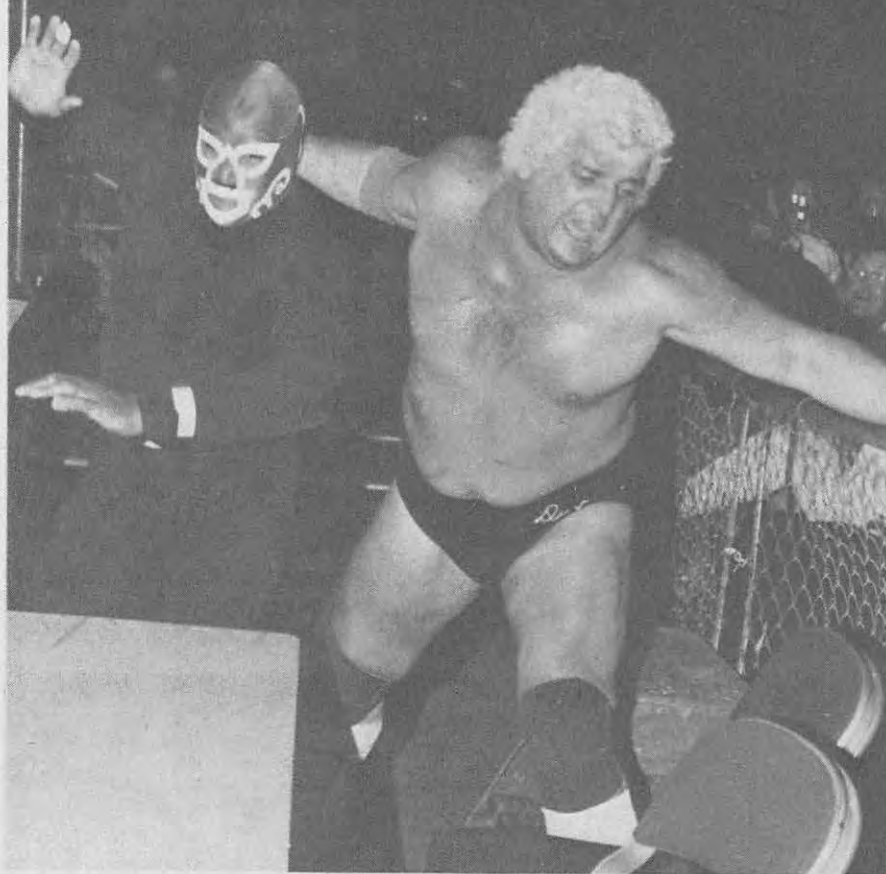
Tommy knew this would happen when he first started.

(Continued on page 54)

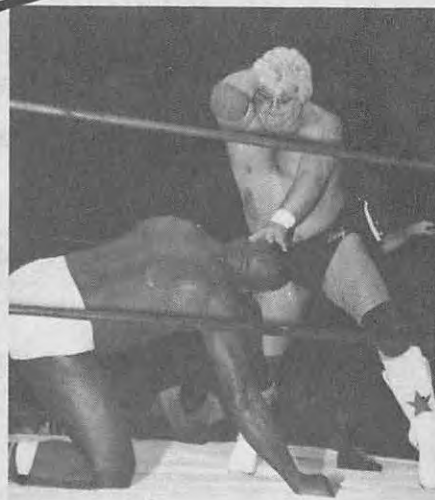
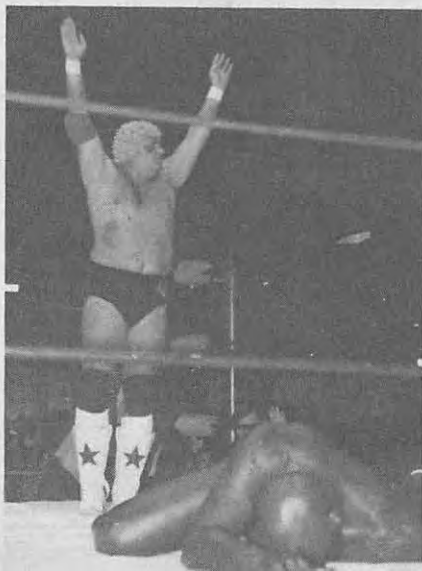
Rookie Tommy Rich has veteran Jacques Goulet helpless (left and below). No wonder Rich is considered a superstar.



Memo to Dusty Rhodes:



Dusty Rhodes is cooking again! Here he tosses the masked Mr. Uganda into a row of chairs outside the ring (above) in Florida. The bionic elbow is about to strike Sonny King (above right). King is down (below) as Rhodes shines in another Florida encounter.



IF YOU WANT THE TITLE, GET BACK

OLD NAMES AND familiar places tempt Dusty Rhodes. Men like Mr. Saito and Pak Song belong to a past darkened by anonymity and a career groaning in obscurity.

That was before "The American Dream" began electrifying audiences and battering opponents on route to a position as the number one wrestling attraction in the world.

He was a superstar. Then

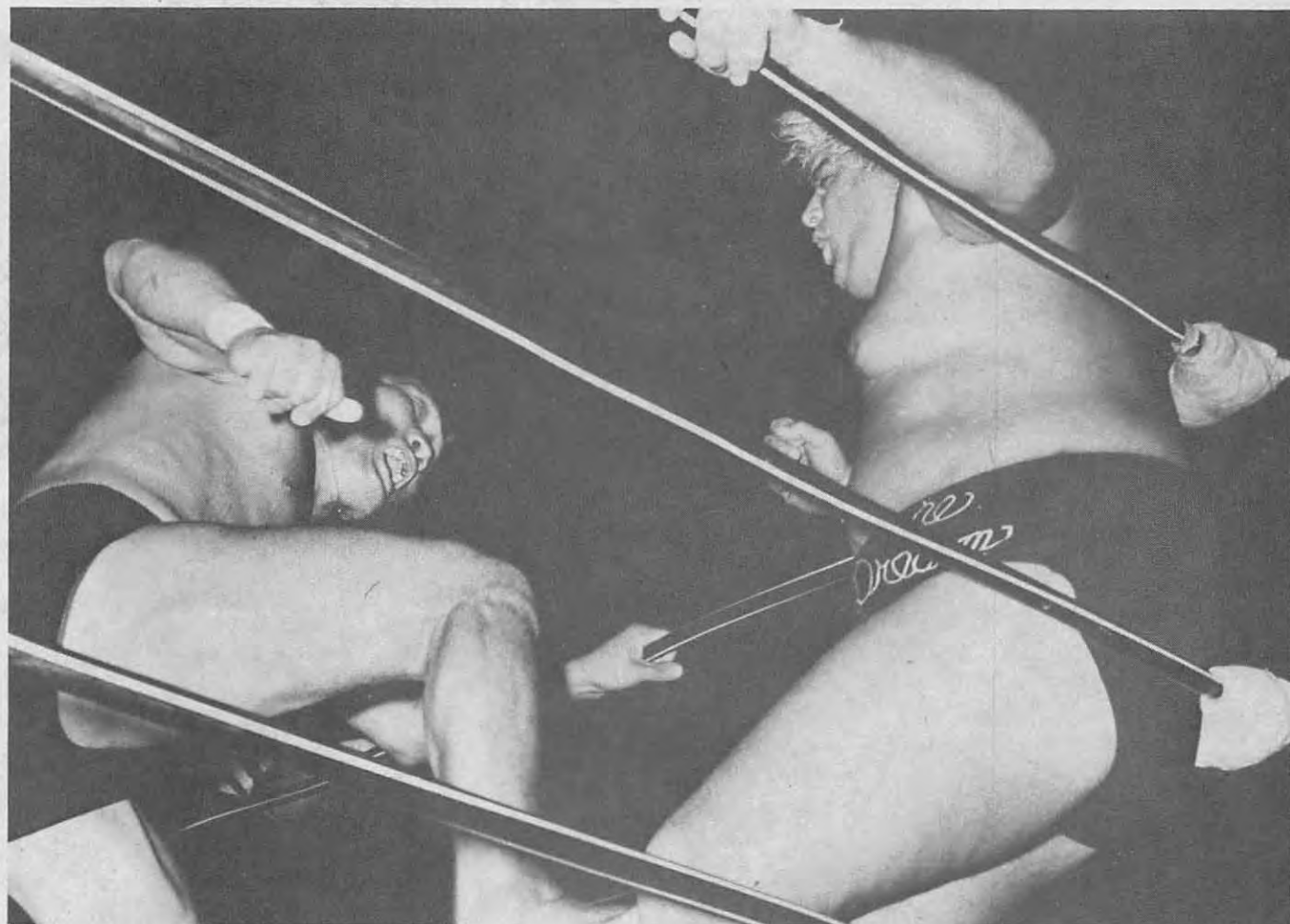
inexplicably, a slump began. Fans were a trifle less enthusiastic. Foes were slightly less intimidated.

His career seemed less promising.

It wasn't as if Rhodes had suffered some catastrophic setback. But for Dusty, any dwindling of his enormous skills is upsetting.

"I could tell things weren't going quite as good as they

When a great athlete has scaled the top of the mountain, he sometimes forgets the path that got him there. Dusty Rhodes, forever searching for his first major title, finds the warmth of the Sunshine State refreshing and invigorating in his quest to regain his former fire



PHOTOS BY DUANE LONG

TO YOUR ROOTS

should have," Rhodes admitted. "I just sat down and took a second look at things.

"For most dudes, my career would be on the upswing. But I got my high standards. I won't let myself down and I won't let my fans down. So I decided something had to be done.

"I found the message by going back to my roots."

In this case, the roots were in Florida, the area in which

Rhodes first gained national attention.

"I don't know, there's just something about Florida," Rhodes said. "Maybe it's the weather or the fans or the food I eat, I'm not really sure.

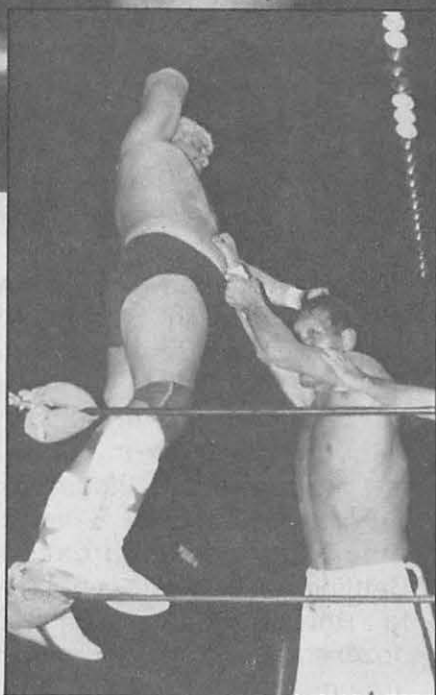
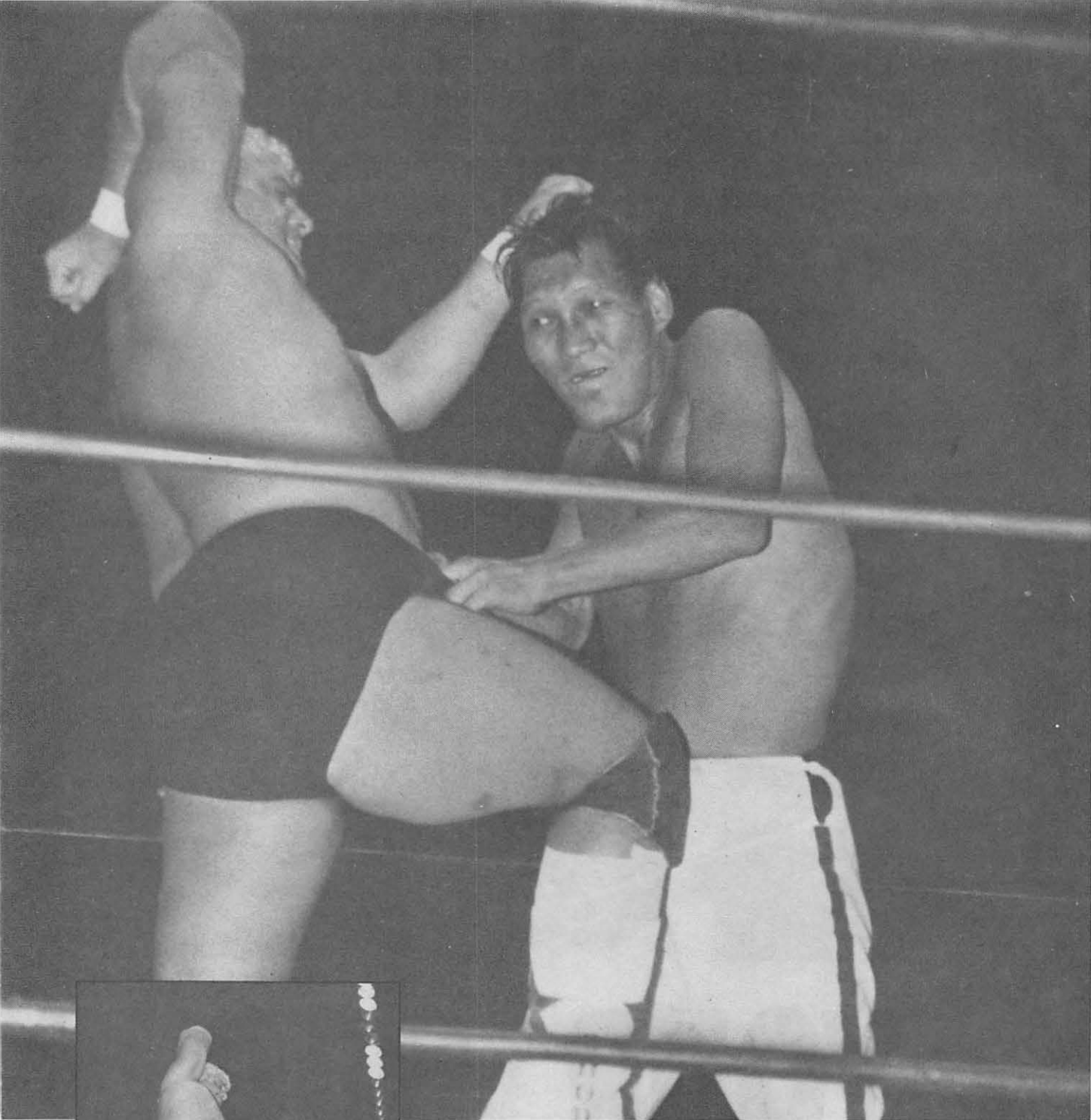
"I do know I get back to the basics down there. That's the important thing."

Essential to Rhodes' repertoire is the fabled bionic elbow. In many recent matches he has

displayed jagged use of the bionic elbow. In Florida, the magic was re-discovered.

"When I wind up now, I feel all the power surging through my veins and going into my elbow. I feel like Superman," Rhodes said.

Enter Pak Song, Mr. Saito and other Florida rulebreakers. Battling rulebreakers is not new to Rhodes. Across America dozens of fiendish rulebreakers are equal to, if not more grue-



Pak Song, a Florida rulebreaker who brings out the best in Rhodes, is the recipient of the bionic elbow (above). Dusty uses extra leverage (left).

some than the Florida variety.

Yet consistently, Rhodes comes up with an amazing match when pitted against them.

"Again, it's the whole attitude and feeling I got in Florida. I don't know if it's that Pak Song and Saito and others are so bad, or if I'm just so motivated," Rhodes said.

Regardless of the reasons,

wrestling in Florida rejuvenates Rhodes. Can he sustain such brilliance or will he require periodic visits back to Florida?

"I might go back, but not for the reasons you think," Rhodes said. "To me, returning to my roots is like getting a new body.

"From now on, I'll be returning out of joy, not necessity." □

PATERA & STUDD:



Some tag teams are made in heaven. But duos like Ken Patera and John Studd originate from the boiling depths of hell. Already, individual goals are overshadowing this tandem's accomplishments as Mid-Atlantic tag team champions

FOR NOW, KEN PATERA and John Studd are partners and friends. For now.

Wrestling is a dangerously unpredictable sport. Often, men will seem like brothers until greed knocks on the door. Or pries it open with the crowbar of unchecked ambition.

Despite Patera and Studd's contentions of mutual respect, an undercurrent of unrest has settled beneath their booted feet. Surprisingly, it has nothing to do with Patera's renowned treachery. For now, anyway.

John Studd has enormous potential. He has already demonstrated such potential by winning the Mid-Atlantic tag team title with Patera. These two muscular rulebreakers work

AN INEVITABLE CONFRONTATION?



well together, complementing each other's dangerous skills with a grizzly determination only tough guys can possess.

Patera's skills are well-known. As Mid-Atlantic champ, he has left a blood-stained legacy throughout the area. Surely, youthful vet Patera and young Studd should be a duo guaranteed to intimidate scientific wrestlers for years to come.

But either unwarranted

paranoia is setting in, or Studd's vague references to the glory of a single title are signs of a bloody split about to erupt.

This Patera-Studd situation should be placed in its proper context, specifically after the recent Peter Maivia-Bob Backlund and Paul Jones-Rick Steamboat break-ups.

One or two splits should not spoil the many successful tag team pairings. Names like Tony Garea and Larry Zbyszko leap to mind. However, there is a crucial difference between people like Garea and Zbyszko and someone like Studd.

Within the confines of their friendship, both Garea and Zbyszko can pursue their individual goals without any ill feelings. Unfortunately, Studd hasn't the maturity nor Patera the kindness to permit amicable free-lancing.

Should Studd ever want to wrestle individually, Patera would be the first to stop him.

"I'm really happy to be Ken's partner," Studd said recently.

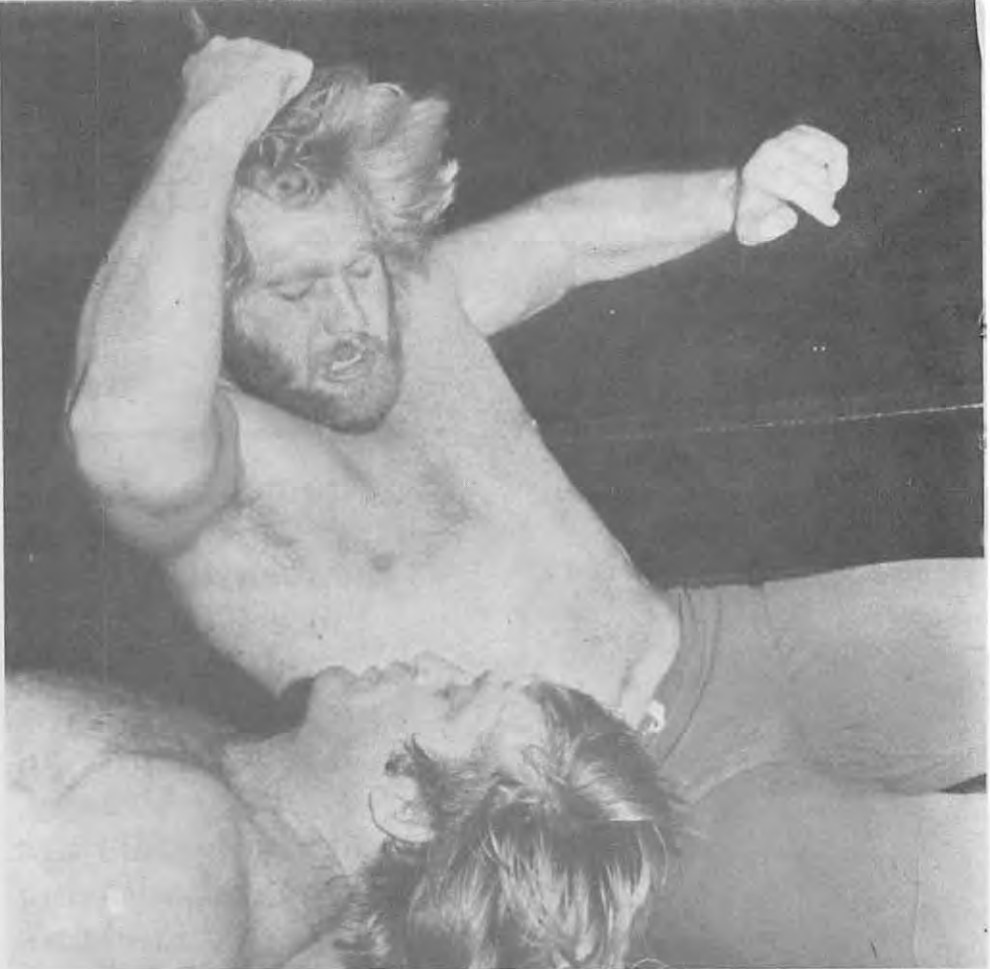
"Sure, we're champs, but we have some cleaning up of the area to do.

"There's a bunch of stupid nice guys running around here." Studd's voice dripped with sarcasm. "Me and Ken want to retire them, if you catch my drift."

On the surface, everything seems smooth. Supposedly, they feel much is still to be achieved as tag team partners.

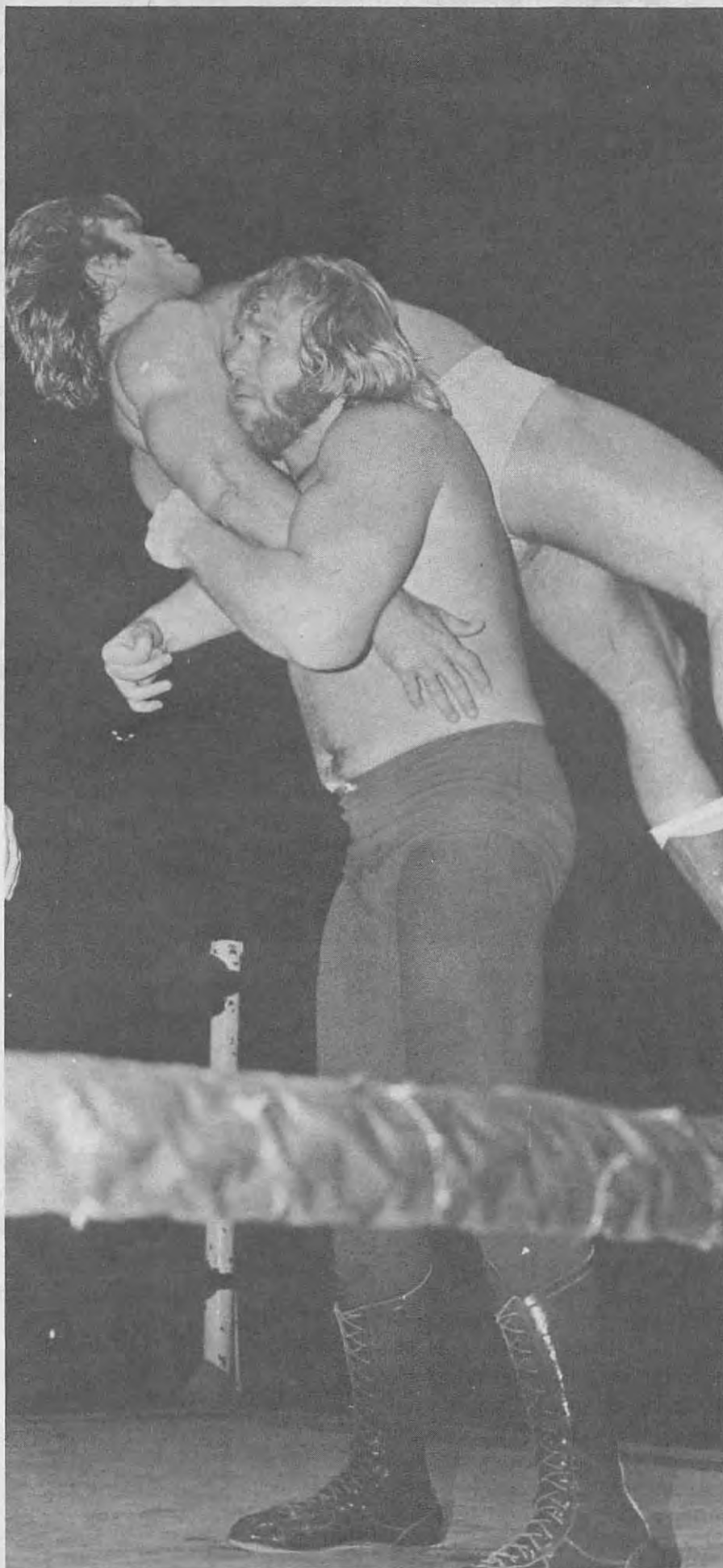
Maybe if Ken Patera were a normal man with an average sized ego, the partnership would not be threatened with talk of future difficulties.

In size, strength, ego and meanness, Ken Patera is over-developed. Under no circumstances will Patera allow Studd the freedom to be both his partner and challenger. Ken happens to be Mid-Atlantic champ. Exactly the title Studd



John Studd displays his awesome power with a crutching elbowsmash to the neck of a prone Paul Orndorff (above). Ken Patera joins in and also punishes a helpless Orndorff (below left). The ballet-like artistry and vicious violence of the sport are evident as Patera brawls with Jimmy Snuka (below right). Studd looks like a caveman bringing home his prey as he carries Paul Orndorff around the ring while administering a backbreaker (right). Will Patera and Studd break up due to individual goals and desires? Many experts consider a split inevitable. The two rulebreakers are currently Mid-Atlantic tag team champions. They terrorize the area.





would be after.

Or would he?

"Well, Ken is my friend, you understand?" Studd began cautiously. "I wouldn't want to hurt him. He's treated me well.

"But I don't see any problems coming up. There shouldn't be anything stopping me from wrestling as an individual."

Have you spoken to Patera about that?

"Not exactly. Couple of times I mentioned it to him. I don't know, Ken musta been in a bad mood 'cause he became real abrupt and snappy. I'll wait until he's a little happier."

Could be a long wait. Patera makes the Loch Ness monster look like the Avon lady.

Approaching Patera with this delicate question is a hazardous duty. Upon hearing the query, Patera's face twisted into sour contempt, his eyes blazing and hateful.

"He hasn't said anything to me," Patera snapped.

When informed that Studd said something to the contrary, Patera seized the edge of the locker and slammed the door shut.

"What did that little twerp say? He said he asked to wrestle as an individual? He doesn't need my damn permission. Let him wrestle as an individual. See if I care.

"See what happens? I train a guy and work with him, trust him and he goes and stabs me in the back. Oh, it's his ambition is it? Anyone bother telling Studd that / wear the Mid-Atlantic belt?" Patera sagged a bit, exhausted from his tirade.

Several minutes later, Patera a Studd were seen leaving the arena together. They talked softly, surrounded by an aura of friendship.

But the scene was brittle and deceiving. Nothing can dismiss the grayish cloud looming on the nearing horizon. □

He Bends But He Won't Break:



RIC FLAIR CANNOT BE BEATEN!

OVER 20,000 FANS are whipped into a frenzy, cheering insanely as Ronnie Garvin captures Ric Flair in an abdominal stretch. Garvin releases the hold, hurls Flair into the ropes, and tries to roll him up into a small package on the rebound. Flair kicks out at the two count. The crowd groans, and the screams of encouragement to Garvin grow louder.

The arena spotlight blends with the thick sweat on Garvin and Flair and makes both men's bodies glisten like cut crystal. The fans are sweating, too; they've been as involved in this match as the combatants over the past 55

minutes. It won't be long before the bell rings, signaling the end of the one-hour time limit.

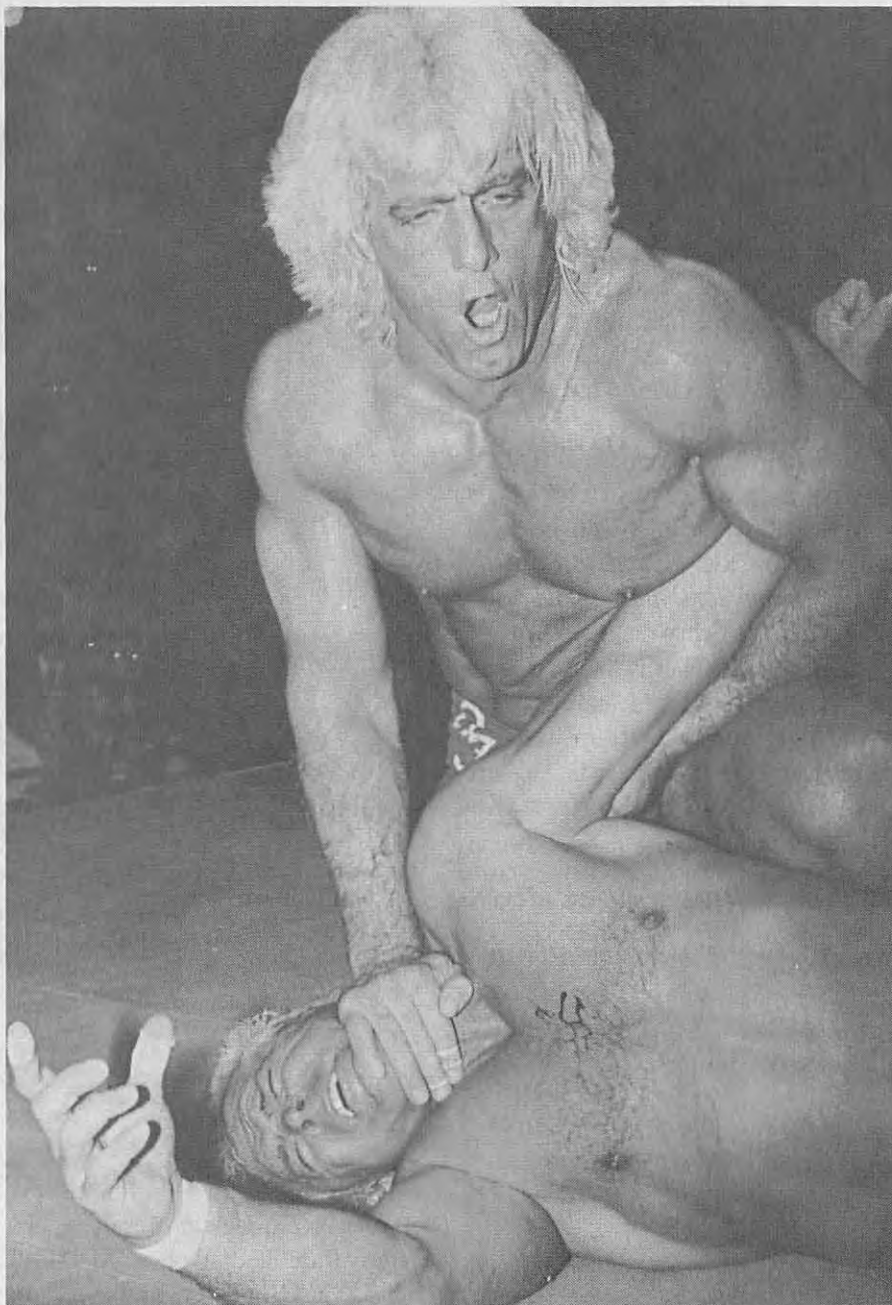
Garvin struggles against his body's demands for respite. He moves in on the champion, delivering a kneelift to Flair's chin. The champion's head snaps back. He is stunned. Flair collapses backward into the corner, and Garvin presses his advantage.

As Garvin's hands become twin blurs of punishing activity, the bell rings and the referee moves in to break up the action. Garvin and Flair have battled to another one-hour draw.

"Wait a minute, wait a minute!"

***The sport's top men
have taken him to
the limits of his
endurance and
beyond. By all
human standards, he
should have lost his
NWA World title
months ago. Maybe
Ric Flair isn't human
after all!***

Garvin implores as the fans hoot and holler and Flair collapses to the mat to catch his breath. "I want five more minutes. Just five more!" The fans



Photos by Scott Romer

cheer their approval, and Flair, weary and exhausted, reluctantly agrees.

In less than the allotted 300 seconds, Garvin pins Flair's shoulders to the mat. But the pinfall hasn't taken place within the contractually-recognized 60 minutes. The title remains with Flair. But Garvin is encouraged, because that pinfall brings him one step closer to the championship gold.

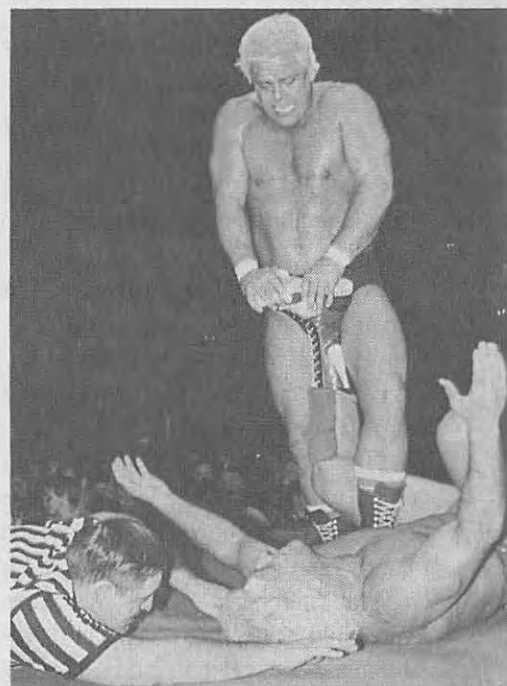
Upon returning to his dressing room, however, Flair downplays Garvin's accomplishment.

"Look, brother, do you think I'm about to strain myself to defend against a pinfall when I've just put my butt on the line for a full hour? You show me anyone else in wrestling, any

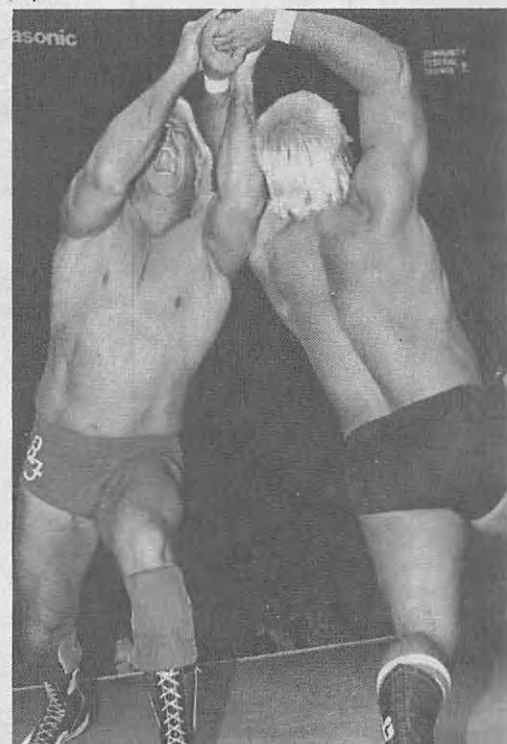
other champion, who can go a full hour. None. The closest I've heard in the past year is my man Jim Garvin and Steve Regal [who lost their AWA World tag belts to Scott Hall and Curt Hennig at the 58-minute mark.]

"Sure, I was pinned by Garvin. But that pin doesn't mean anything. It was a non-title pinfall. And frankly, like I said, I wasn't straining myself in those five minutes. There's no need to. Sure, I'll let Garvin have the pinfall. It's all a part of the psychological game of wrestling. Garvin gets overconfident because of that, and then watch slick Ric the next time we step through those ring ropes together!"

Garvin, however, disagrees vehe-



Flair holds Garvin in place with an armbar while twisting his neck with his free hand (left). Ronnie cinches down on a stepover toehold, drawing a cry of agony from the champion (above). A test of strength (below) ordinarily has little effect on the match from a physical standpoint, but could make a great deal of difference from a mental aspect.



mentally with Flair's excuses.

"Ric Flair is not the kind of man who is going to let anyone get an easy pin on him," he said. "He has too much of an ego, too much pride. He always wants to look the very best to the fans, and he's very aware of his image. He's not about to let anybody

have anything at the expense of his ego. You can bet those last five minutes meant as much to him as the previous 60, and you can bet that my pinfall, even though it didn't win the title, made Flair hurt pretty darn hard deep down."

Two other wrestlers who agree with Garvin's point of view are Dusty Rhodes and Magnum T.A.

"I've taken Flair to the one-hour limit on several occasions," T.A. told *The Wrestler*, "and let's face it: He's good. He's damn good. Hell, he's the best. He knows more counterwrestling than anyone else in the sport. But his days are numbered. Time was when Flair could put a man away in 15 or 20 minutes tops. But I've been pressing him to an hour, Ronnie's been pressing him to an hour, and Dusty's been pressing him to an hour. Heck, the first time Flair went into the ring

Garvin mounts the turnbuckles and puts his "Hands of Stone" to use (below). Twisting Garvin's left arm, the champ is careful to stay out of range of the right (top right). Flair, who is the recipient of an average of five two-counts in each title defense, attempts to pin his challenger (right).

against Nikita Koloff it lasted almost 45 minutes!"

"I agree with my main man Magnum, here," Rhodes said. "Ricky Flair, the man's title is soon to be *history*, jack. It's soon to be passed on. The changing of the guard is about to happen, daddy, and you can bet that when the axe falls, it's gonna fall hard, and it's gonna fall right on Ricky Flair's scrawny little neck, jack!"

One man who presents what is arguably the most objective view of Flair's current status is a man who has seen hundreds of Ric Flair title defenses: *World Championship Wrestling* announcer Tony Schiavone.

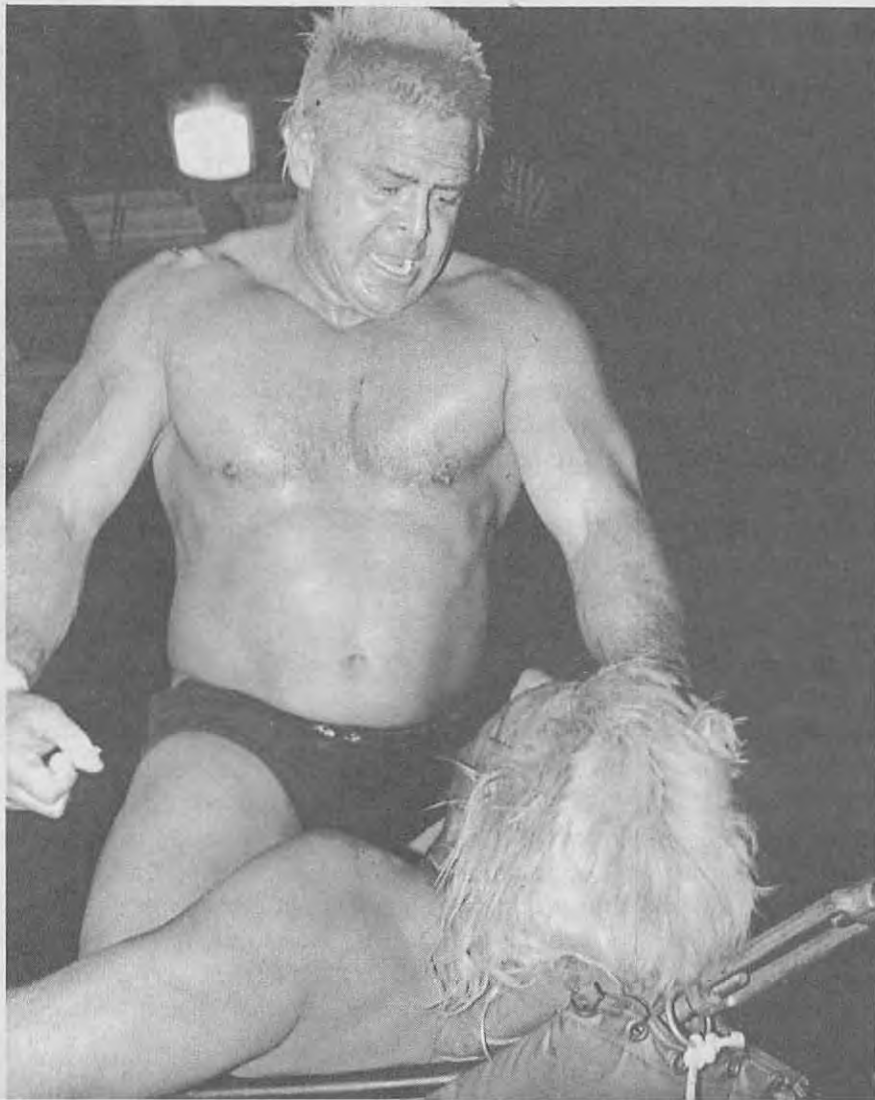
"Let's face it, Flair is a tactical master of the sport," Schiavone said. "And right now, the cream has risen to the top. He's been defending against Garvin, against Rhodes, against Ko-



loff, against Magnum, even against Harley Race and Wahoo McDaniel. The list just seems to go on and on and on, and the competition has never been tougher.

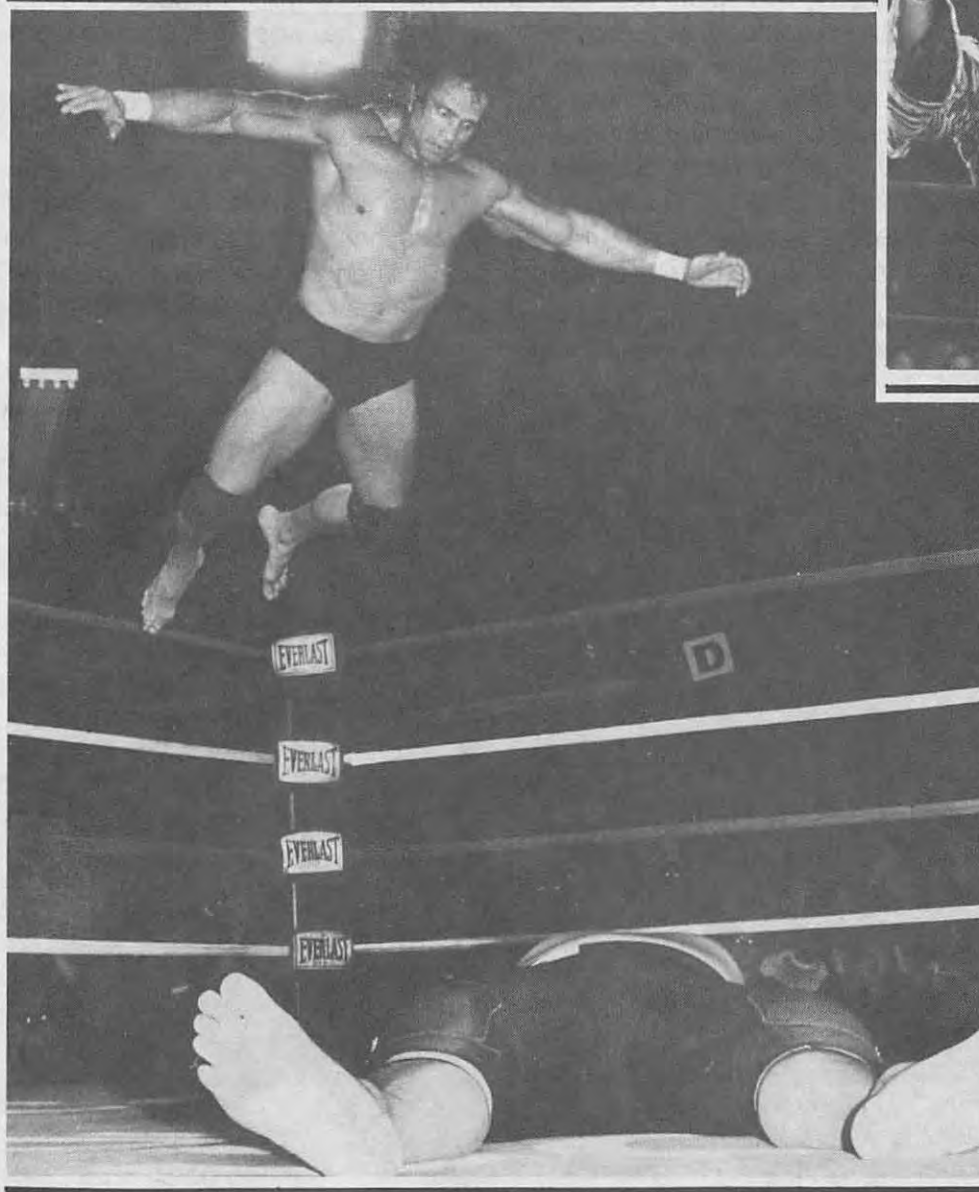
"But I disagree with Dusty," Schiavone added. "I don't think Flair's ready to fall at all. I think he's reaffirming his championship, and he's doing it in the most amazing way wrestling fans have ever seen. Never before in the history of the NWA has any one champion weathered such challenges. It's an incredible thing to see.

"Flair's like a tree in the wind," Schiavone concluded. "That wind of challenge is blowing like a hurricane right now. And Flair's bending with that wind, he's being taken to those one-hour limits. But I don't think we're about to see that tree uprooted. Not for a long, long time to come." □



Update On Jimmy Snuka:

THE SUPERFLY WILL SOAR AGAIN!



Jimmy Snuka's daredevil style (left) endeared him to WWF fans in the early 1980s. The Superfly's familiar salute is once again being seen in mainland U.S.A. (above).

Jimmy Snuka's personal demons proved more formidable than his toughest opponents. Now, after a self-imposed exile, Snuka has returned to the states and appears better than ever

SUPERFLY JIMMY SNUKA'S foot nudged a conch shell—he gave it a soft kick back into the foamy ocean swell and watched carefully as it drifted out to sea. Like most Polynesian natives, Snuka's nautical intuition told him the eddys and undertows of these waters would carry the

shell quickly beyond the breakers where a sharp southeasterly current would crest and impassionately deposit it into the vast Pacific.

Snuka's gaze floated lazily out with the shell, past Kealaikahiki Point toward Honolulu's lights and beyond. At this point in his career,

Snuka had no desire to share the fate of the shellfish; he had come to enjoy the pleasing sameness of his life, the elegance of routinized Paradise. Beyond the island, things became hazily warped and unpredictable; life between the skyscrapers could drive a man to do crazy things.

So, there was a sadness as Snuka rose against the iridescent backdrop of Maui's Red Hills. Snuka knew he would not play out his life on these beloved palm-froked shores. He knew there were chapters of his life yet to be written, and the grist for those pages could be found only in the mainland's tumultuous jetstream. One week later Snuka followed the conch's trail eastward, and found himself wrestling main events in California and Oregon, his year-long Polynesian exile reduced to memory.

There was a point in his career—specifically the early 1980s—when Superfly Jimmy Snuka was the most popular ath-

lete in professional wrestling. The incalculable risks he took in the ring, the daring promiscuity of his moves, and his defiant courage created a legion of fans more loyal and outspoken than those of Hulk Hogan, Dusty Rhodes, or any other titled wrestler.

Snuka's "superfly" maneuver—whereupon he'd scale the top rope (once, in a WWF title match against champion Bob Backlund, Snuka climbed a 15-foot cage to reproduce the move) and soar majestically outward, his body a muscled evocation of Greek royalty, until he came crashing down on his helpless opponent. Just as Snuka has credited the legendary Mil Mascaras with inspiring him to

achieve new heights, so have dozens of wrestlers given Snuka the credit for changing their careers.

But there has never been anyone, before or since, who could light up a crowd like Snuka. No wrestler possessed his natural flair for drama and excitement. Although much of his career was spent as a rulebreaker, Snuka was never vilified as one. In many ways he was the precursor for competitors like The Road Warriors, Lex Luger, and Randy Savage—rulebreakers who are cheered because of their dynamic ring skills, while their opponents are hooted indifferently.

When Snuka renounced his rulebreaking tendencies, his star peaked. There were no title shots to be had in the WWF—fellow fan

Snuka looks intently at his partner, Greg Gagne, who backs Nord the Barbarian into his corner during WrestleRock. Snuka, certainly not unfamiliar with rulebreaking tactics, will sneak in a few shots when Bruiser Brody tries to rescue his partner.



favorite Hulk Hogan remained champion and the WWF avoided the pairing like a contagious disease—but it mattered little. In feuds against Roddy Piper, Bob Orton, and Paul Orndorff, Snuka demonstrated his remarkable mettle. His leaps brought fans to the matches and to their feet, and if Snuka felt at all slighted by not being able to battle for the title, he didn't show it: After he and Piper engaged in one of their scaled-down armageddons he was quoted as saying, "Belts don't interest me, brother. It's the action I crave. I need to keep moving or else I'll dry up like an overbaked coconut."

It wasn't long, however, before the native—and essentially native—Polynesian became embroiled in another sort of action, action that removed him from the familiar confines of the ring and threw him out into the cold and vulnerable social world of New York. Snuka won't discuss the period of time in late 1984 when his movements out of the ring and into the night were reportedly more spectacular than his movements inside it.

That, coupled with a falling out with the WWF promoters, eventually sent a tired and embittered Snuka packing back to the Fiji Islands, where he fell into an uneasy retirement, "I needed to rest, that much I knew. But I didn't want to just stop all of a sudden. But the islands heal, brother. They heal and rejuvenate. Things turned out for the best."

After a four-month hiatus, Snuka wrestled briefly in Japan and appeared on spot shows throughout the South Pacific. Fans were shocked to see his trim and defined body padded with 25 extra pounds, although the extra weight barely diminished his ability.

"I wasn't in the shape I wanted to be," Snuka explained, "but I was too anxious to get back into



Snuka's biceps bulge as he snapmares The Barbarian to the mat (above). Brody makes the mistake of putting the Superfly in motion (below). Snuka will bound off the ropes and connect with a cross-bodyblock.



the ring. I couldn't wait to finish training."

Working the Polynesian circuit whetted the Superfly's appetite—for increased competition, not the grouper souffle he had grown accustomed to eating four times a day. "I've begun to shed the weight," he says, and his recent

appearances here in the states confirmed his claims.

After months of isolated soul searching, Snuka decided to return to the scenes of his greatest triumphs. A week of easy victories in Portland alerted promoters that Jimmy Snuka was back. Verne Gagne didn't hesitate in signing the proven crowd favorite to his WrestleRock card, pitting him in a tag team match with his son, Greg, against Bruiser Brody and Nord the Barbarian. Snuka leapt from the top rope to pin Nord. The crowd of 22,000 cheered like hell. Snuka waved at his fans, unable to conceal a triumphant grin. It was just like old times.

Back in his hotel room (this disciplined Snuka declined several invitations to rage about town), he discussed his plans for the future.

"One day a time," he said. "That is my philosophy. I'm just happy to be back in the ring in front of big crowds. The people haven't forgotten me and that's important. I still have a lot of friends left in the country and I'm going to make sure they see the Superfly at his best. I won't make the same mistakes twice." □

Terror is written all over the face of Ivan Putski as Bob Roop uses a painful nervehold to try and subdue him.

ALARM IS MANIFESTED in many different ways. It changes from person to person, from situation to situation, from dream to dream. When Bob Roop entered the pro ranks 10 years ago replete with credentials as NCAA wrestling champion, the world of pro wrestling seemed just another trivial empire for him to conquer.

In that time Roop has *never* won a federation title. He is not even classified as one of the leading contenders. That is surprising, especially when one considers his native skills. If it is surprising to the fans, it is devastatingly terrifying to Roop.

Now the terror has turned into panic. Cold, naked panic. The years are rushing by, the waters are carrying his splintered dreams out into the hungering vastness of the sea of defeat.

The time has come for Roop to re-evaluate his position. He has seen it, has been bewildered by it, and now is scared.

The absolute war between Roop and Ivan Putski is a perfect example of the former NCAA champion's fear. He was not



THE ONE MAN BOB ROOP MUST BEAT

In his amateur days, Bob Roop was the golden boy who could do no wrong. As a professional, his career has been an erratic history of splendor and cruelty. It has also been without a major championship. The problem doesn't lie with fate but within the complex Roop himself

ready for Putski. His timing was off. He should not have wrestled Putski. At least not so soon after coming back to Florida. But he did.

The result was predictable. Roop's tantrums led to his disqualification. He might have lost anyway, but when he saw one more element of failure materialize, he lost all aspect of self-control. He went berserk.

"I took the match because I can beat Putski. I am better than he is," Roop explained haltingly through the frustrations which shook his large frame. "I am so damn talented and yet I haven't

won the title yet. I'm doing something wrong, but I don't know what.

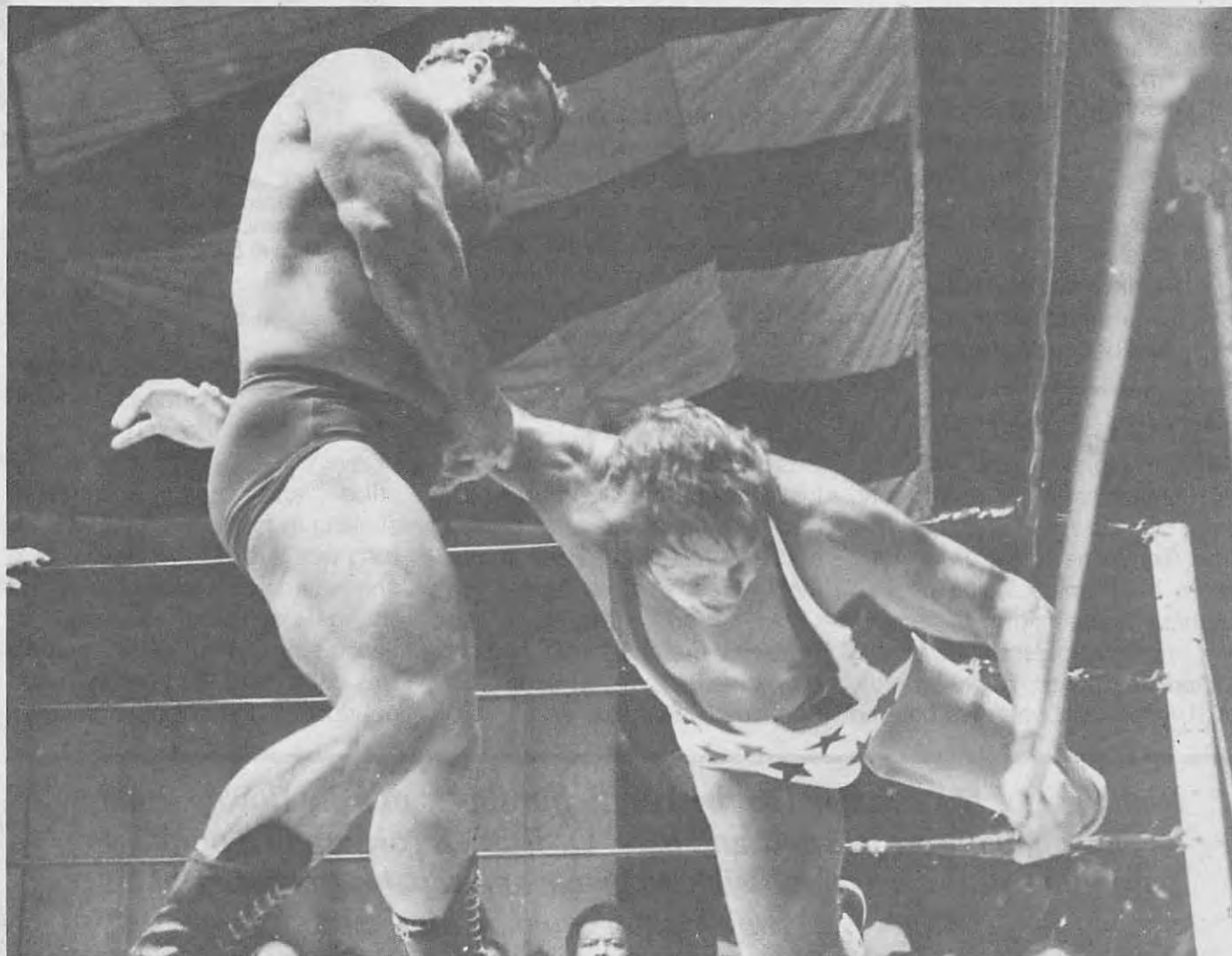
The panic prompted this impatience. It becomes a suffocating nightmare, this sensation of impending failure. The more one tries, the less likely are the chances for success. And then you begin pressing, begin worrying, and then you can no longer think straight.

"Look man, I whipped Backlund when we were in the NCAA together," Roop said. "I pulverized him. I am far superior

(Continued on page 56)



Many matches have seen Bob end up a bloody mess (above). It was obvious he was not at his best against Ivan (below).



Warning To Hulk Hogan IF YOU TRUST ROWDY RODDY— YOU'LL PAY THE PIPER!

"Mr. Piper is basically a paranoid personality . . . he could not survive for long as a favorite among the fans . . . Roddy Piper is a danger to himself and to everyone he comes in contact with. He could very well become a fan favorite at some point in his career, and he would be a very believable one. However, the moment someone encroaches on his territory, he becomes capable of anything. He is a bomb waiting to explode and should be watched at all times."

—Sidney M. Basil, Ph.D.
September 1985
Inside Wrestling

"Call Dr. Basil, immediately. Piper's at it again."

—Editor-in-Chief Peter King
after learning that Piper
had become a fan favorite.

BEING EDITOR OF the largest family of wrestling and boxing magazines in the entire world does not allow a man much free time. Try as he might, Peter King has a hard time keeping up with all that's happening in the expansive sport of professional wrestling without relying on his trustworthy VCR, especially when his beloved

New York Mets are enjoying the finest season in their history.

So, while all you wrestling fans are relaxing on a Saturday morning, taking in the most recent edition of *WWF Championship Wrestling*, King is usually toiling away at a business meeting, or planning the next issue of one of the 11 wrestling magazines he oversees, or simply recovering from the exhaustive 96-hour work week he routinely keeps up.

Then, between all of this, between the on-the-run meals and the few hours of sleep he manages to grab each night, King can usually be found in front of his television set, watching the hours of tape sent in from correspondents across the country, attempting to keep up with the ever-changing sport of professional wrestling. Understandably, he occasionally falls behind.

Which explains why our newest assistant editor, Dave Rosenbaum, didn't realize his foolishness when King walked in red-eyed on a Tuesday morning and said, "Call Dr. Basil immediately. Piper's at it again. He's turned fan favorite," and Rosenbaum sarcastically responded, "Where have you been? That happened four days ago!"



Roddy Piper glares at his former bodyguard, Ace Orton, who, under Adrian Adonis' employment, is now wearing a pink cowboy hat and being called "Acey."

King followed up this untimely remark with a barrage of insults that assaulted the sensitive ears of every female employee in the office and had Rosenbaum shaking in his shoes. Finally, after King was sufficiently calmed down and was convinced not to fire the young Rosenbaum for insubordination, an emergency meeting was called and the editorial board got down to the business at hand.

Roddy Piper has returned to the WWF, but this is not the Rowdy Roddy fans have come to know and hate. Or is it? According to a noted psychologist, Piper is impossible to gauge and capable of change at any time. And Hulk Hogan could be his victim

"This is an incredible development," said King. "From what I saw, Piper came onto the set of 'The Flower Shop' and told Adrian Adonis that he wanted his show back. Adonis refused, and then introduced Cowboy Bob Orton—whom he called 'Acey'—as his new bodyguard. Well, this shocked me, and then Piper exchanged some pretty heated words with Adonis, Orton, and



Jimmy Hart. From what I can tell, Piper has turned good and might be ready to align with Hogan. I think we had better call in Dr. Basil. He's an expert on Piper."

No sooner said than done. Rosenbaum, still worried about saving his job, tracked down the rather elusive and much-in-demand Dr. Basil at the psychologist's Berkeley retreat. The following day, Basil was flown to New York and taken by limousine to our New York office, where he was immediately shown a tape of the Flower Shop incident.

"This is most unusual," remarked Basil after viewing the tape several times. "You will remember that I said Piper could become a very believable fan favorite. Well, this is even more convincing than I myself could
(Continued on page 52)

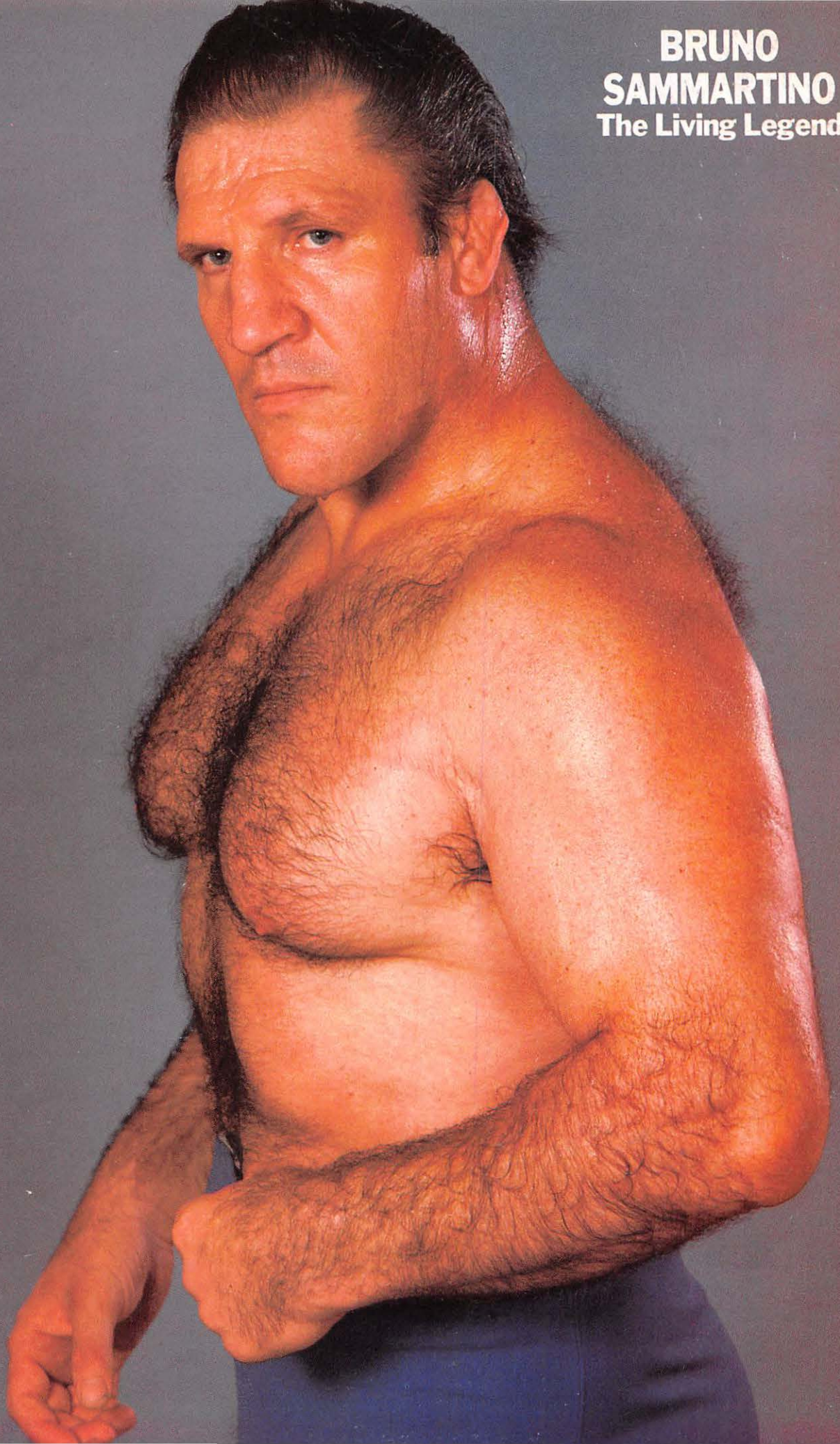


THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS

Robert Gibson & Rick Morton



**BRUNO
SAMMARTINO**
The Living Legend



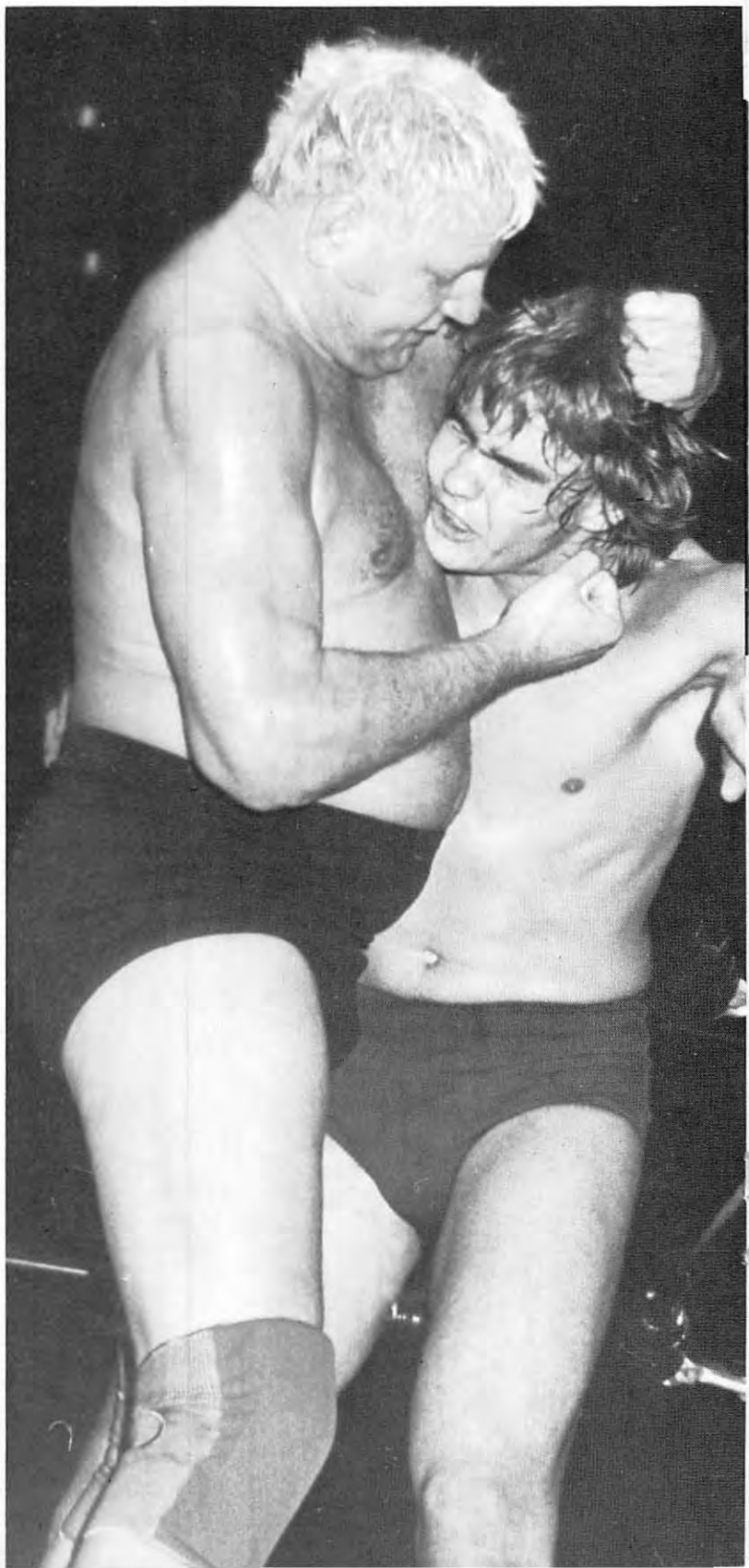
Dick Murdoch's Message To Barry Windham:

PHOTOS BY
PAUL BAUMAN

**"DON'T
CALL
ME
YOUR
HERO!"**

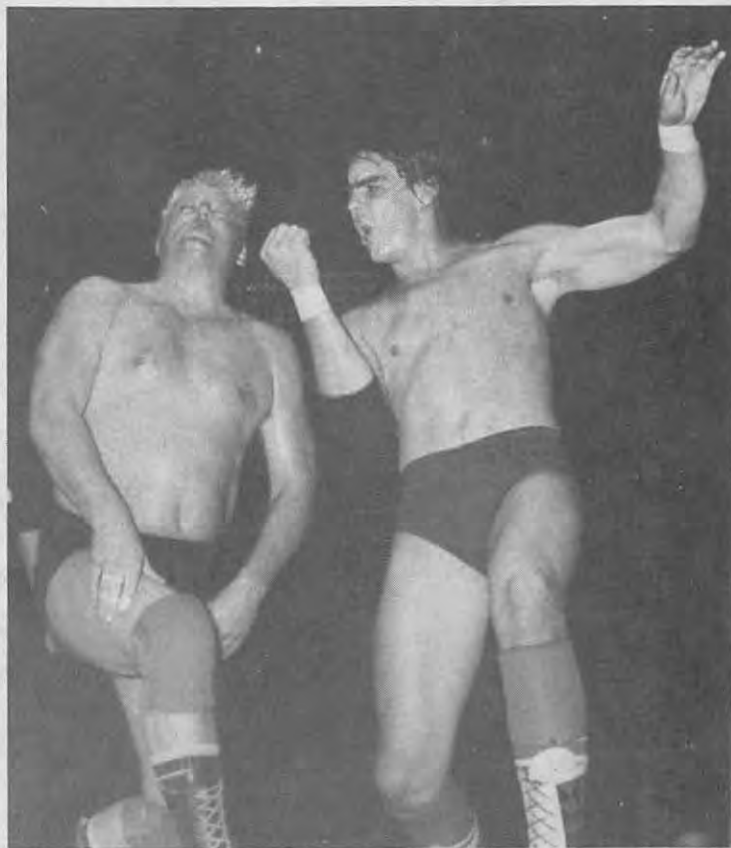
Dick Murdoch is an unassuming sort of guy. Even throughout his shocking pledge to wrestle anyone for money, his essential character hasn't changed. But Barry Windham, who once idolized Murdoch, is crushed. And Murdoch has vowed to wipe any lingering hero-worship from Windham's body

Murdoch grabs a handful of Windham's hair and pounds his right hand into his defenseless opponent's ear.





Young Windham rings his senior opponent's head (left) and straightens him with an uppercut to the side of the head (below). Windham showed obvious resentment toward his fallen idol.



BARRY WINDHAM RECALLS his early idolization of Dick Murdoch with wounded puzzlement.

"I tell you something," Windham said. "I thought the world of Dick Murdoch. I always thought he was the perfect combination of toughness and grace. He knew exactly what he had to do to win. He knew what it took, both preparing himself physically and mentally, and how far he had to go without losing the respect of the fans."

"I really idolized him, really I did. I thought he was terrific. I'll never forget the first time I saw him wrestle with Rhodes back when they were The Outlaws. If anything totally convinced me I had to be a professional wrestler, it was watching Dick Murdoch."

"Now, I don't know . . ." Windham's voice trailed off on a cloud of disbelief.

Windham isn't alone in his shock. All wrestling ponders the greedy, amoral attitude of Murdoch. Ever since accepting Lord Al Hays' blank checks to wrestle any opponent, friend or foe, Murdoch has been driven from the scientific wrestling community in Florida.

But Murdoch could care less. If anything, he gloats over his estrangement, as if such hate confirms his own lonely crusade. As for Windham, Murdoch is delighted the youngster's image of Murdoch the Idol has fallen into disrepute. And Murdoch will do anything to make sure Windham's idolization stays shattered.

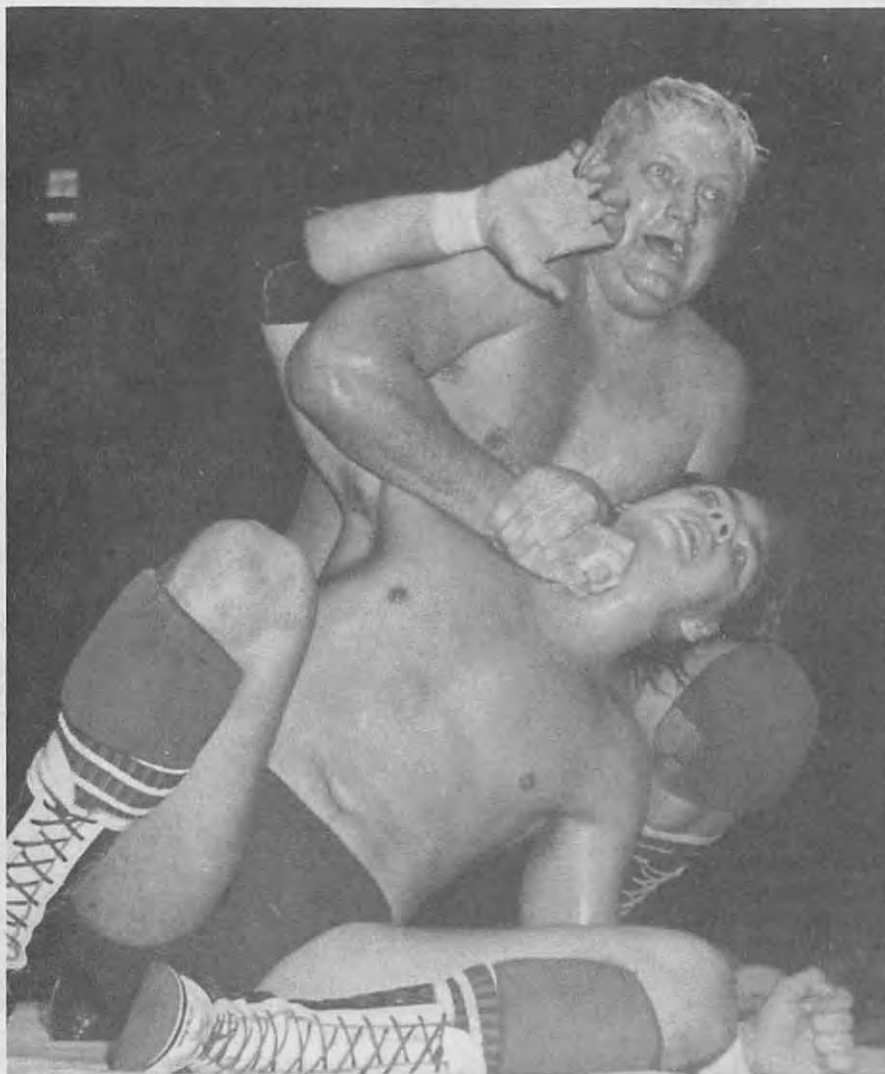
"I don't want that punk idolizin' me," growled Murdoch. "I got two very good reasons, one for the welfare of the punk, the other for my welfare."

Murdoch paused and twisted his meaty hands together.

"Any punk who idolizes or worships a wrestler, even if he is deservin' like me, is a first-class, absolute fool. When you try and idolize someone, you always don't look at the real situation. You don't want your idol to be anything less than perfect, so you take his good qualities, of which I have many, and build them up so the guy is a god or somethin'."

"Then, the first time the guy steps outta line, you're crushed. Well, you can't live in a kinda fantasy world, it just ain't healthy. No one deserves to be idolized 'cause you ain't idolizin' a real thing."

"Only reason why someone would idolize another person like that is they feel kinda inadequate. By idolizin' someone else, they kinda borrow from that guy and it makes them feel a bit more sure and all."



Murdoch applies pressure to Windham's neck, but the maneuver is deemed legal since he is not covering the windpipe (above). Barry cleverly uses Murdoch's weight to his own advantage (right). Murdoch catches Windham flush on the chin with a powerful elbowsmash (below).

"And that just ain't healthy, not at all. Sooner or later you're gonna get crushed. You try and live in this mean, tough real world with your fantasies and you'll get squashed like an ant.

"As for how it affects me, first off, I don't want no punk kids slobberin' and cryin' all over me 'cause they think I'm wonderful based on their perverted little minds. I should be accepted as bein' wonderful on my own terms, not someone else's.

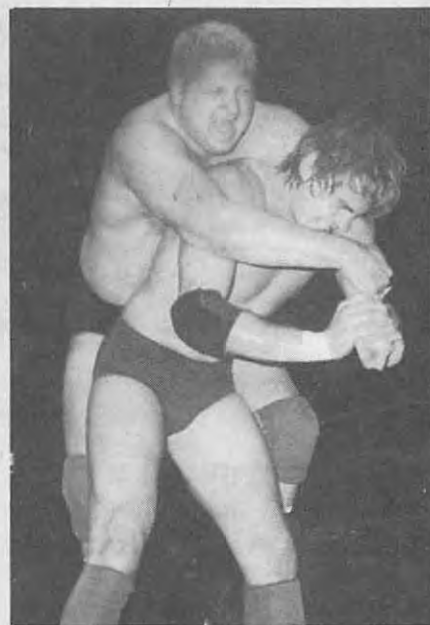
"Now look at how Windham is all bent outta shape 'cause he thinks I'm a terrible guy suddenly. What a punk like that does to me is kinda throw around even more of a false image of Dick Murdoch. I never



told anyone to like me. That was his own decision. And now that he thinks I ain't come up to his own stupid, precious standards, he makes me out to be even worse than the fools and airheads in this state already think I am.

"So what I gotta do is teach the punk all about reality. I'm really kinda doin' this for the punk's own good. And, of course, mine. And it don't hurt me one little bit that there's a big fat check waitin' for me at the end of this match.

"If Windham ever wants to



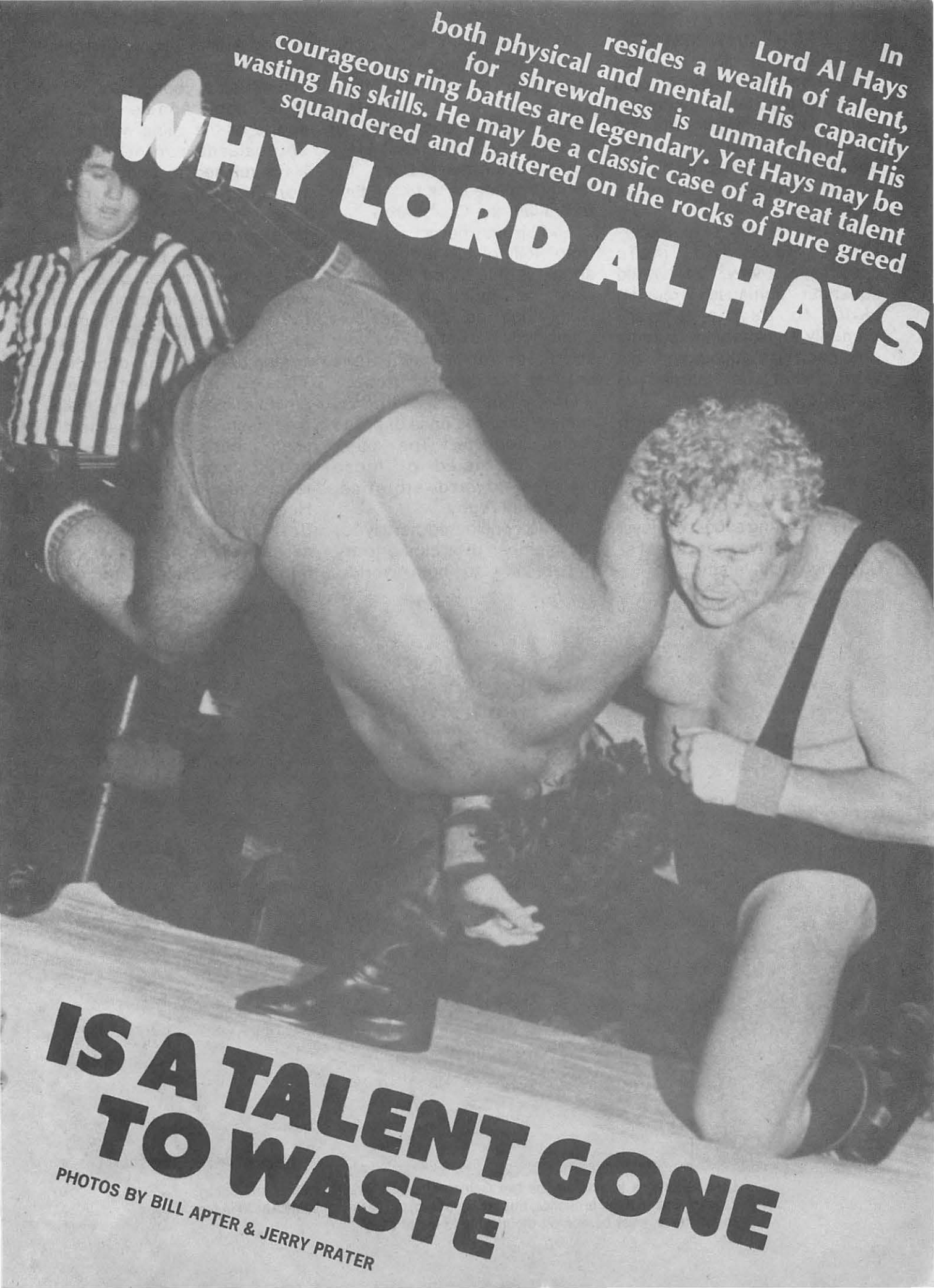
take his little skills and build them into somethin' worthwhile, he better understand what is important and what ain't important in wrestlin'. All that matters is the big bucks. Nothin' ever matters to me except the bucks. Once Windham learns that, maybe he won't be such a little, snivelin' punk."

After the brutal match, Windham sat sadly before his lock. He kept shaking his head, for a moment unable to speak. Finally, his scratchy voice eeked out a few words of remorse.

"I used to think a lot of Murdoch," he said softly. "Now I realize he's no better than the rest. And that's really too bad." □

In Lord Al Hays resides a wealth of talent, both physical and mental. His capacity for shrewdness is unmatched. His courageous ring battles are legendary. Yet Hays may be wasting his skills. He may be a classic case of a great talent squandered and battered on the rocks of pure greed

WHY LORD AL HAYS



IS A TALENT GONE TO WASTE

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER & JERRY PRATER

ALL FOREIGN WRESTLERS seeking immigration visas must submit a detailed personal history to the State Department. Lord Alfred Hays was no exception. Until now, the specifics of his personal history remain a mystery. Until now, that is.

Our staff, eager to understand Hays and, more specifically, why he would squander immense wrestling skills to devote himself primarily to managing, recently obtained Hays' application. In a word, what we learned is stunning.

We received so much material an entire issue of *The Wrestler* would have had to be devoted to printing the file in full. Instead, we focused on the most interesting aspect of Hays' life, his formative years spent at Cambridge University.

As descendant to a noble title, Hays encountered considerable resentment from some of his classmates. Though they, too, were of wealthy backgrounds, Hays could accurately trace his family lineage back to the time of William the Conqueror.

And Hays never refrained from telling all around him about his blue-blood. But snobs were as much a part of Cambridge as daily tea. At Cambridge existed a very specific social structure between two different groups.

One clique consisted of the intellectuals, the ones of proud social heritage. The other clique consisted of those inclined toward athletics, specifically rugby.

It was considered heresy for any member of a clique to try and belong to both worlds.

Young Al Hays committed just such heresy.

Even as a young tyke, Hays loved rugby. And he loved the sports of the mind with equal enthusiasm. Unfortunately, Hays refused to choose. With considerable egocentrism, Hays decided he would break time-honored tradition and attempt to enter both worlds.

His rejection was quick and violent. Light scrimmages on the rugby field turned into gang tackling practice with Hays beaten beneath a hill of bodies. Though his talents were obvious, Hays couldn't make the team. He consistently scored, but to do so, he nearly had to steal the ball from teammates. On one occasion, Hays was wrenched from the field after a tremendous advance. When replaced, Hays trampled the shards of tradition



Lord Al Hays is flanked by the two men he manages, Nikolai Volkoff and Bobby Jagers. Due to Hays' brilliance, this tag team seems to be unstoppable. The NWA tag team title may yet be won on the playing fields of Eton!

even further by questioning the coach's decision. For that unseemly outburst, he was tossed off the team.

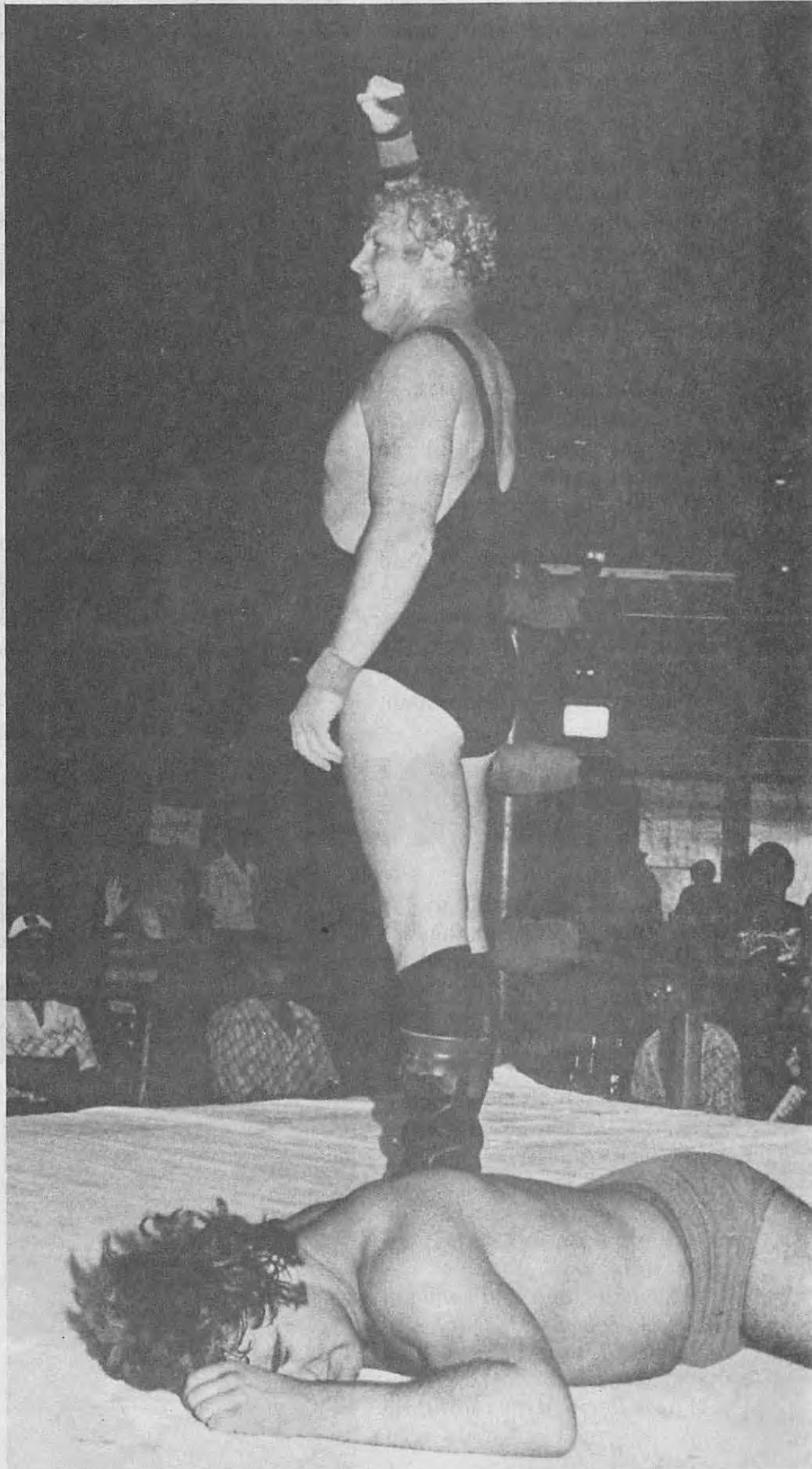
Thus Hays returned to the intellectual world only to find similar rejection, though on a more subtle level. Suddenly there weren't enough chess boards around when he wished to play and, should he be foresighted enough to bring his own to the study room, all potential opponents insisted they didn't have time to play. His regular bridge game disbanded only to re-unite a week later with another partner supplanting Hays. His efforts to borrow books at the school library were thwarted for every work he requested was either out or on a holdover list. Don't bother putting your name down, Mr. Hays. The wait could take months.

For nearly a year, Hays lived within the cone of silence. All his friends disappeared. Previously friendly teachers drilled him unmercifully in class. Even when he knew the answers, the instructors pressed him into areas he never could have studied. But to Hays' credit, he never flinched. Despite the agonizing loneliness, Hays didn't give in.

Then the big break happened. The rugby team manager fell victim to a disease known as shingles. An intensive search erupted for the proper replacement. A man of intelligence, of courage, and knowledge of rugby was needed. But who could fill the void in a world where divisions were so studiously maintained? Only one person.

The coach called Hays and asked him to take the job. Hays wanted to know if there was still a chance he could play. No matter the team's desperation, tradition still reigned supreme.

(Continued on page 62)



Hays, the superb and ruthless athlete, stands grandly over his fallen foe, Scott McGhee. Though Hays devotes most of his energies to managing, every so often he proves again that his wrestling skills are among the best around. Only his past keeps him from becoming a world champion.

In Florida, Dory Jr. staggers NWA champion Harley Race with a forearm smash (right). St. Louis, Missouri, the night before (far right): Dory tries to finish off Race.

WHETHER DORY FUNK JR. is the number one contender in the NWA is a subjective opinion unreceptive to clinical analysis. What can be reduced to a diagnostic degree is his intensity, a determination which borders on the feverish.

Between the sights of Dory's future stands a thick, burly figure, arrogant, deceitful, an abasement to the glorious past champions. Dory knows what it was like for the NWA to have a man possessed of both skill and valor.

He was once champion.

And now the hunt to rid the NWA of this loathsome pestilence has been undertaken

DORY FUNK JR.'S RELENTLESS HUNT OF HARLEY RACE

with hungering ambition by Dory. Such devices as ratings are considered banal irritances to him. Standing patiently in line for title matches are beneath him.

Adhering to any traditional pursuits and schedulings, such as a logical distance between matches, is useless.

Dory wants Harley Race. And he wants him now. And Heaven help the person foolish enough to get in his way.

"I have decided that I will get Harley Race's belt," Dory said fervently. "There will be nothing that can stop me, short of death.

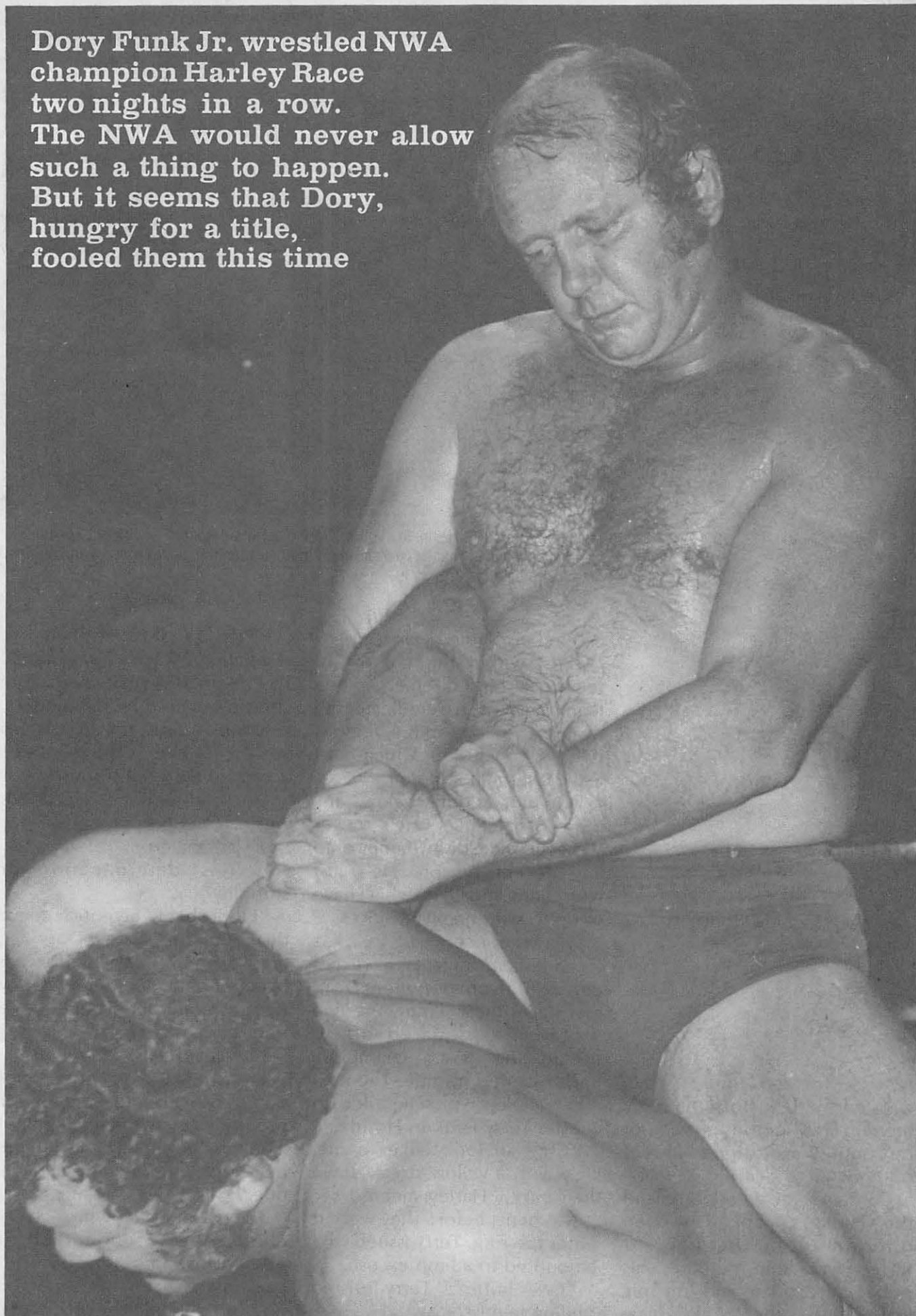
"I have decided my career will

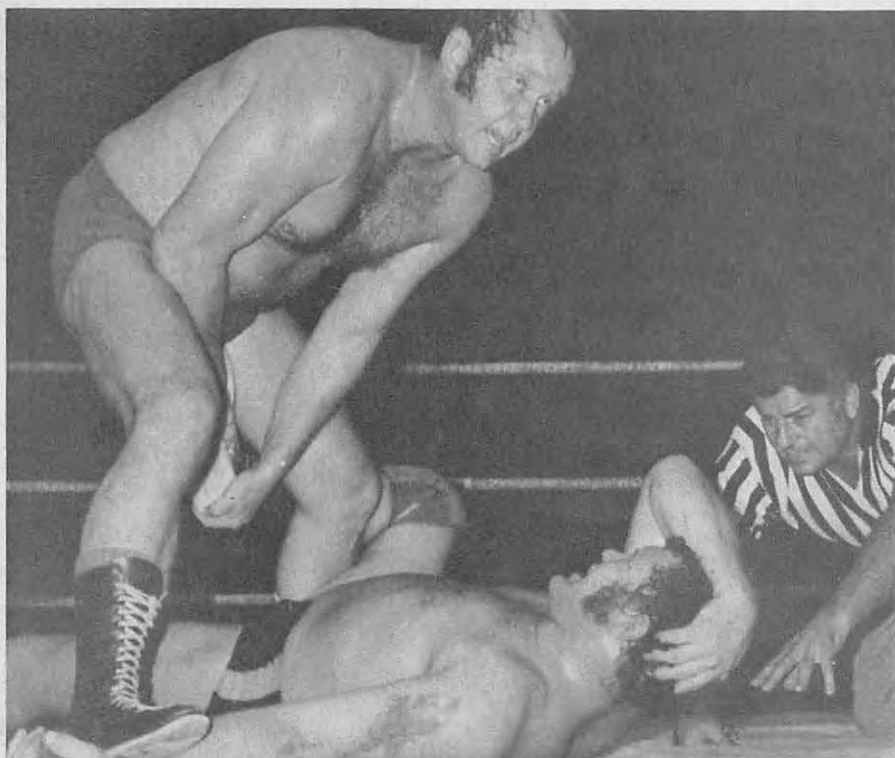
St. Louis: Race locks Dory in a headlock (right). The champion's knee hits its target (far right), Dory's chest.



PHOTOS BY JERRY PRATER & ROGER DEEM

Dory Funk Jr. wrestled NWA
champion Harley Race
two nights in a row.
The NWA would never allow
such a thing to happen.
But it seems that Dory,
hungry for a title,
fooled them this time





Trying to win the title in St. Louis, Dory uses his patented "Spinning Toehold," a finishing maneuver that has earned many victories for him. Race survived and retained his championship.

not be fulfilled until I have wrested the belt from that ugly monkey. He must lose. I will not rest until I have stripped him of his crown."

Contempt between Race and the Funks is not a sudden phenomenon. Distaste for Race's wrestling methods, his public arrogance and myopic jealousy by the Funks have

created a volatile rivalry.

Thus, within this context of reciprocal hatred, emerges one man resolved to eradicate the rivalry. The solution is a heinous one, a conclusion which may leave one man crippled.

"I'm not about to show any mercy for Race. He's never shown it to me or my family or to any decent person. He's just nauseating and I'll do what I have to do to win the NWA title."

Illustrative of Funk's incandescent rage is a recent confrontation between Dory and Race. In St. Louis, the two protagonists squared off to decide the NWA champion. Race retained his title. The next night Harley was scheduled to wrestle Terry Funk in Florida.

"They all look alike to me. Ugly with a yellow streak down their back," Harley sneered.

Moments before they were to enter the ring, Terry issued what amounted to a limp excuse.

"I was hurtin'," Terry insisted, smiling faintly.

"Pursuant to federation regulations, Race's consent had to be obtained before a substitute could be installed.

"One Funk is as much fun to whip as the other," Race accepted Dory's insertion.

Dory and Race wrestled. Again. Twenty-four hours after their last match.

Is this determination or stupidity?

"I'll probably be criticized for this, but I don't care," Dory said emphatically. "I have to do what I feel is right. Wrestling Harley Race at every opportunity is the right thing for me."

"I want the NWA belt back. That's it, flat out statement, I don't care about ratings or propriety or anything like that. I won't use gutter tactics to get the belt back, but I will regain my title."

The manner in which Terry eluded his commitment to permit Dory an historic back-to-back match is reminiscent of the way Terry originally won his belt.



Jack Brisco was NWA champion. Succumbing to enormous public pressure, Brisco assented to a match against Dory. However, Dory skillfully escaped the match and allowed Terry to wrestle for the belt. And Terry won.

Several factors blaze within Dory, propelling him toward Race. Harley was the man who beat Dory for the NWA title. Harley has often insulted the Funk family. Harley's style of wrestling is antithetical to the Dory Funk manner of grappling.

These factors burn so furiously that they meld into one seething volcano, erupting in maddening rampages at Harley Race, a strategy characterized as much by icy will as haphazard spontaneity.

"I was once champion and Race took it from me. You think I can live with the knowledge that I lost to Race and couldn't beat him in a rematch? Do you think that my career can ever be the same after that?

"No, this black mark must be wiped off my name. I cannot rest with the thought that I wasn't good enough to whip Race.

Funk uses a combination bridge and headlock (above). All attempts are futile as Harley retains his title (below).



"Harley Race is a low animal. I will get him. I don't care anymore what must be done. If I must wrestle him every single night, from one end of the country to the other, then that's what I'll do.



"There's too much at stake here. There's too much family honor and a way of life to uphold and loyalty to my friends.

"And all those sleepless nights, lying awake, dreaming of victory." □

Wrestling 87

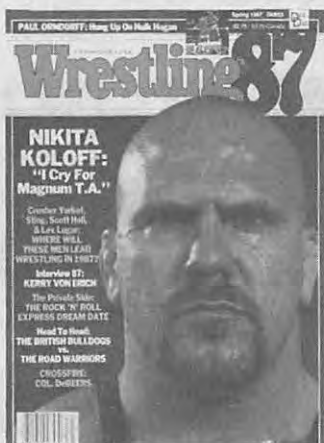
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Wrestling 87

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MIKE VON ERICH

(Continued from page 15)

"No worry," Mike replied. "Nothing can keep me away from that ring tonight. That doctor's gonna have to tie me down."

That afternoon, Mike made his way downtown to the doctor's office for his final physical before returning to the ring. Naturally, a star such as Mike Von Erich does not walk along the crowded streets of a busy city without being approached by numerous fans, and today was no exception.

Once again, Mike walked through the door of the doctor's office 15 minutes late. A half-hour later, he was given a clean bill of health and the physician gave the final signature to Mike's license to wrestle in the state of Texas.



Lance and Mike stunned Hacksaw Butch Reed so badly with this double-dropkick, they knocked the "H" off his trunks!

"You're a medical miracle," said the doctor. "I've never seen anything like it in my entire career. Look at this. This is a chart of your progress over the past six months. You've gone from 140 to 210 pounds and from what I can tell, it's all muscle. Your shoulder is nearly perfectly healed, and, from a medical standpoint, it would be hard to tell what you've been through."



Mike realizes that it will take months to rid himself of the ring rust, so he will concentrate on tag team wrestling for a while.

A smile came to Mike's face. The long ordeal was nearly over. He had proven to others what he had always known: that through faith and courage, nearly anything is possible. Nine months earlier, a minister had already said the last rites for Mike when his temperature rose to 107 degrees and his lungs and kidneys began to fail. Mike was lying unconscious on the brink of death, and even if he did survive, doctors predicted that he would suffer serious brain damage.

But Mike had proven them wrong and that night in Dallas, all the months of pain and suffering would pay off.

The 23,000 eyes in Reunion Arena were all peeled on the entrance to the dressing room, and when Mike Von Erich took his first step out the door, the crowd simultaneously exploded with applause. Then, Mike held the six-man tag team belt over his head and the crowd was in a wild frenzy. As he shook hands with fans while walking to the ring, there was barely a dry eye in the place.

Then Mike climbed into the ring and surveyed the scene surrounding

(Continued on page 50)

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MIKE VON ERICH

(Continued from page 49)



Von Erich tells Mark Lowrance and the TV audience that his shoulder injury will not stop him. It was following Mike's shoulder surgery that he contracted toxic shock syndrome—that very nearly did stop him!

him. Loving, adoring fans poured their hearts out to this brave wrestler and Mike was not about to disappoint. Finally, the match got underway and from the outset, it was apparent that challengers Borne, Reed, and Sawyer did not have a chance.

The night belonged to the Von Erichs, and although Mike was shaky and a little off on his timing, he still displayed sparks of brilliance. As expected, Lance did much of the wrestling, and in the end pinned Borne to successfully defend the championship.

"It felt strange to be back," ad-

mitted Mike. "I was mostly wrestling on instinct, because I'm not sharp, and I felt that my timing was off on my aerial maneuvers. Physically, though, I feel fine. It's just a matter of fine tuning my game, but that will take some time. I'm in no hurry. But I'll tell you one thing..."

Mike's voice tailed off and he stared into open space, but what was on his mind was obvious. He had done the impossible. He was back to where he wanted to be. He had relived his dream.

Mike Von Erich was a wrestler again. ☐

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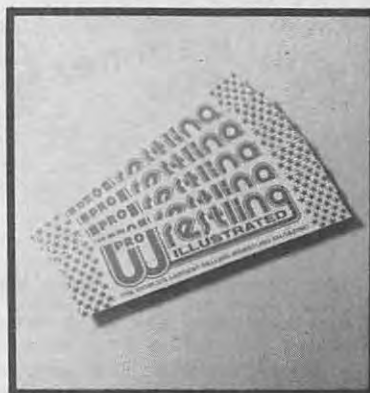
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WARNING TO HOGAN

(Continued from page 35)



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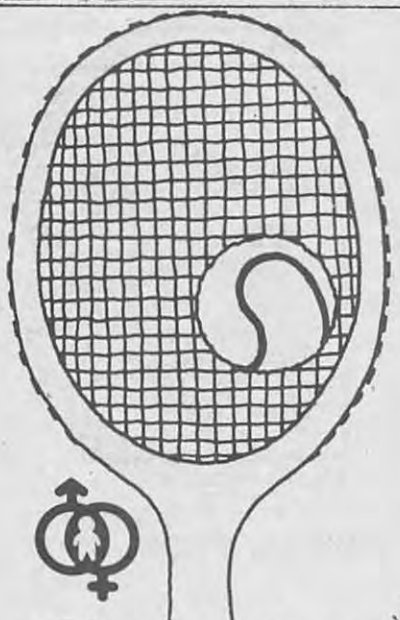
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Now that he's a fan favorite again, perhaps Piper will again feud with Greg Valentine (above). Certainly, we can expect some more Piper vs. Paul Orndorff battles (below).



have imagined. Maybe all of that time off, making the movie and associating with the outside world, did him some good. His speech patterns have changed entirely. Mr. Piper seems much more in control of himself, even when provoked, and never once lapsed into his rambling style of speech. Perhaps he is serious about this change."

But could it be true? More than once in the past, Piper was a fan favorite and turned rulebreaker. His two-year feud with Hulk Hogan became the most publicized rivalry in wrestling, culminating in

the famous "War To Settle The Score," in which Piper, Paul Orndorff, and Bob Orton attacked Hogan, Mr. T, Cyndi Lauper, and Lou Albano. His ring style and obnoxious personality made him the only man to win "Most Hated Wrestler of the Year" two straight times.

So how could he have changed so much? Take the situation with Paul Orndorff. Piper and "Mr. Wonderful" teamed up against Hogan and Mr. T in the inaugural WrestleMania, but Piper and Orndorff crossed signals, causing Orndorff's eventual pin. This caused a breakup of the team and led to Orndorff's friendship with Hogan.

We all know how that one turned out. Orndorff finally turned on Hogan and is now aligned with Orton, King Kong Bundy, John Studd, and Adonis. This was obviously a contrived, pre-planned situation. When Orndorff stepped into the ring with Hogan for that fateful match against Bundy and Studd, his plans were already made. The same could be true with Piper. The possibility certainly exists that Adonis and Orndorff have sent out Piper as the bait to lure an unsuspecting Hogan.

"This is very possible," agreed Dr. Basil. "It would be very consistent with Piper's personality. He is a very dangerous man, and I would suggest that Hogan keep a very close eye on him. Even if Piper's change of heart is for real—and remember, subconsciously, Piper wants to be loved by the fans—he's capable of turning around at any time. I see no reason right now why Hogan shouldn't join Piper, but he must keep his guard up. You never know when Piper's going to slip, and when he does, it's going to be a scary situation." □

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AUGUST 1982

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January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana, Road Warriors, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

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March 1985/SPECIAL YEAR-END AWARDS ISSUE! FOUR PAGE COLOR SECTION: Billy Jack, Piper, Flair vs. Kerry; PLUS: 1984 In Review.



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July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter, Hogan vs. Piper, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

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December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura, Great American Bash, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

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TOMMY RICH

(Continued from page 19)

He was ready for the worst. "Other wrestlers warned me about those threats. I can't say that they don't bother me because things like that do bother me. But that won't stop my wrestling career, nothing will."

In the short time that he has been wrestling, Tommy has been asked by many of the top

Rich flips crafty veteran Bill White. For one so young, Tommy Rich has gone quite far.

rated wrestlers to form a tag team. "I would love to wrestle in a tag team," said Tommy, "but I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. I will wait awhile and feel them out before I decide what to do. I do plan to form a tag team eventually, but not right now."

The fans love him. They literally demand him at every match. When he is scheduled, you can be sure that the arena will be sold out. It is very rare that the fans support him this



Tommy Rich is as talented as he is good looking. Is he as good as they say? Absolutely!

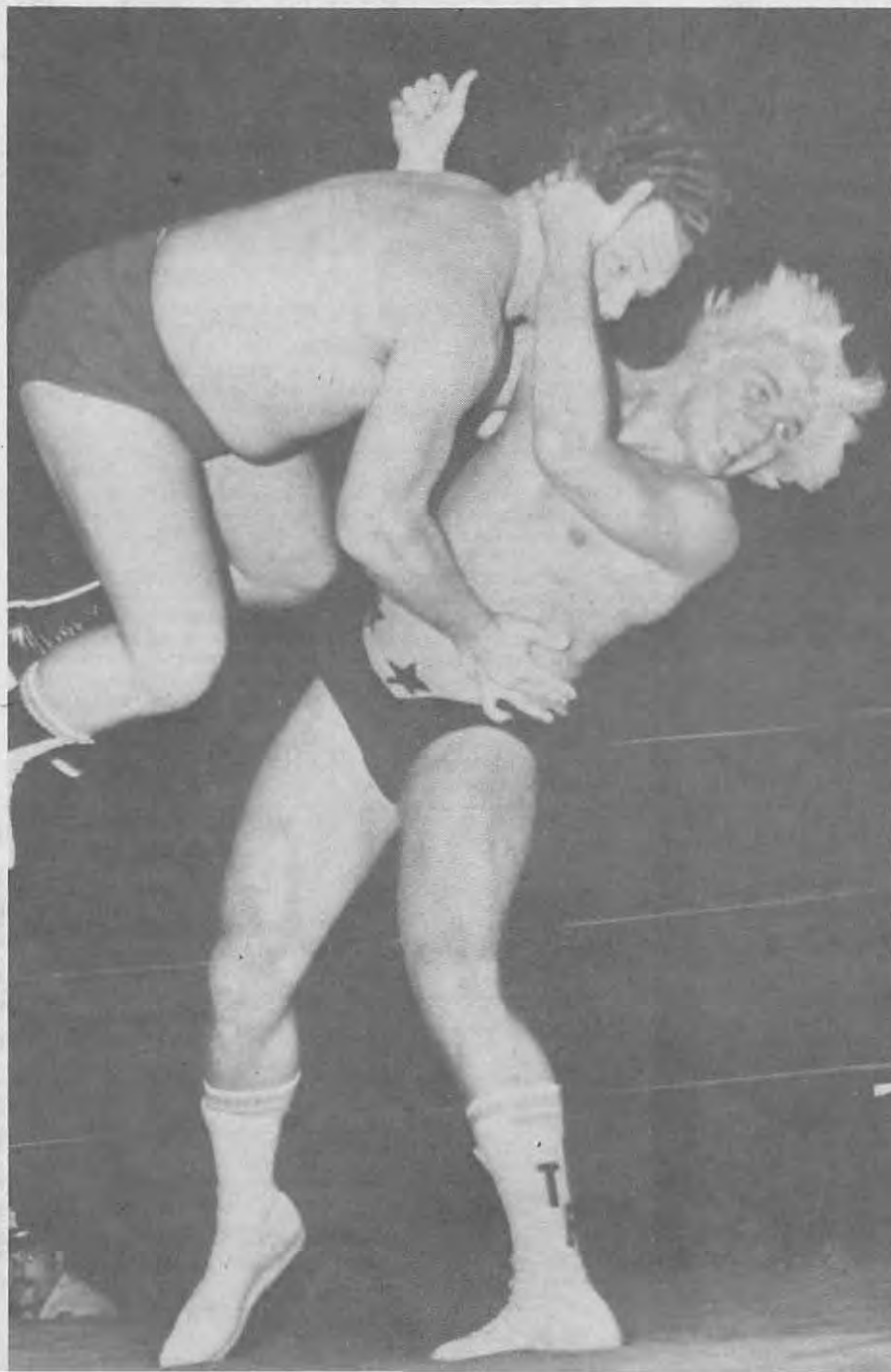
much in so short a time.

"I never thought that the fans would matter to me so much," Tommy said, "but the more they cheer, the harder I try. I have to prove it to the fans as well as myself that I can do it. I want this to be my life." And this is his life. One that requires many hours of hard work.

He has no time for himself. He rarely goes outside of his house. A dedicated athlete, he can be found working out in the gym that he has built for himself. He works out five hours a day, everyday. Running 10 miles a day does not bother him. "If I didn't like what I was doing, I just wouldn't do it. But I love wrestling so much that I have to love everything that goes with it. It's all one big puzzle. Every piece must fit exactly."

With an attitude like that and with the determination that he has, Tommy Rich will be around for a long time. He is a rookie with the talents of a veteran. Some experts have even predicted a major championship in his future. The fans love him, the other wrestlers seem to get along with him, and he has shown everyone just how much he loves the sport.

Is Tommy Rich as good as they say? The answer seems to be an overwhelming yes! □



Wrestling

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May 1980/Koloff-Anderson, Brody-Spoiler, Graham, Andre.

June 1980/Graham, Patera, Rhodes, Lawler, Zbyszko.

July 1980/Bruno-Graham, Samoans, Star Wars 1980.

October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II, Super D.

January 1981/Morales-Fuji, Zbyszko, Thornton, Keirn.

March 1981/SPECIAL EDITION—Results of 1980 Fan Awards Poll

April 1981/Atlas, Flair, Moondogs, Wrestling II.

June 1981/Morales-Khan, Lawler, Slater, Piper.

August 1981/Freebirds, Mascaras, Wrestling II, Brisco.

September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.

October 1981/Rich-Race, Hogan-Hansen, Moondogs, Freebirds, Putski-Koloff.

November 1981/Rhodes-DiBiase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler.

December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre.

March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.

April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D, Ladd.

May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Superstar, Dillon, Wrestling II.

June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other.

July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.

August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel.

October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich.

November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.

December 1982/Backlund-Rose, Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humberdink.

January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales-Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler.

March 1983/Flair-Bass, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat, Patera.

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JUNE 1983

June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba.

July 1983/Valiant-Humperdink, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.

October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.

November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.

December 1983/Windham-LeDuc, Santana, Sullivan, Garvin.

January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.

February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.

March 1984/Starrcade '83, Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.

April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff.

May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!

June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.

July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourney.

August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces Of Wrestling.

September 1984/Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.

October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video, Atlas, Orange Bowl card.

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January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, Pro Wrestling USA, Valentine.

February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.

March 1985/Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.

April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwins, 1984 in Pictures, Blair.

May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas.

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July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka.

August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorff, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II.

September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Orndorff, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr.

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November 1985/Freebirds-Warriors, Mid-South, Haynes, Rhodes, Savage.

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March 1986/Starrcade '85, Ventura, Windham, Sunshine, Slaughter.



APRIL 1986

April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.

May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.

June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.

July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Shepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.

August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourney, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.

September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourney.

October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.

November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.

December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourney.

January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.

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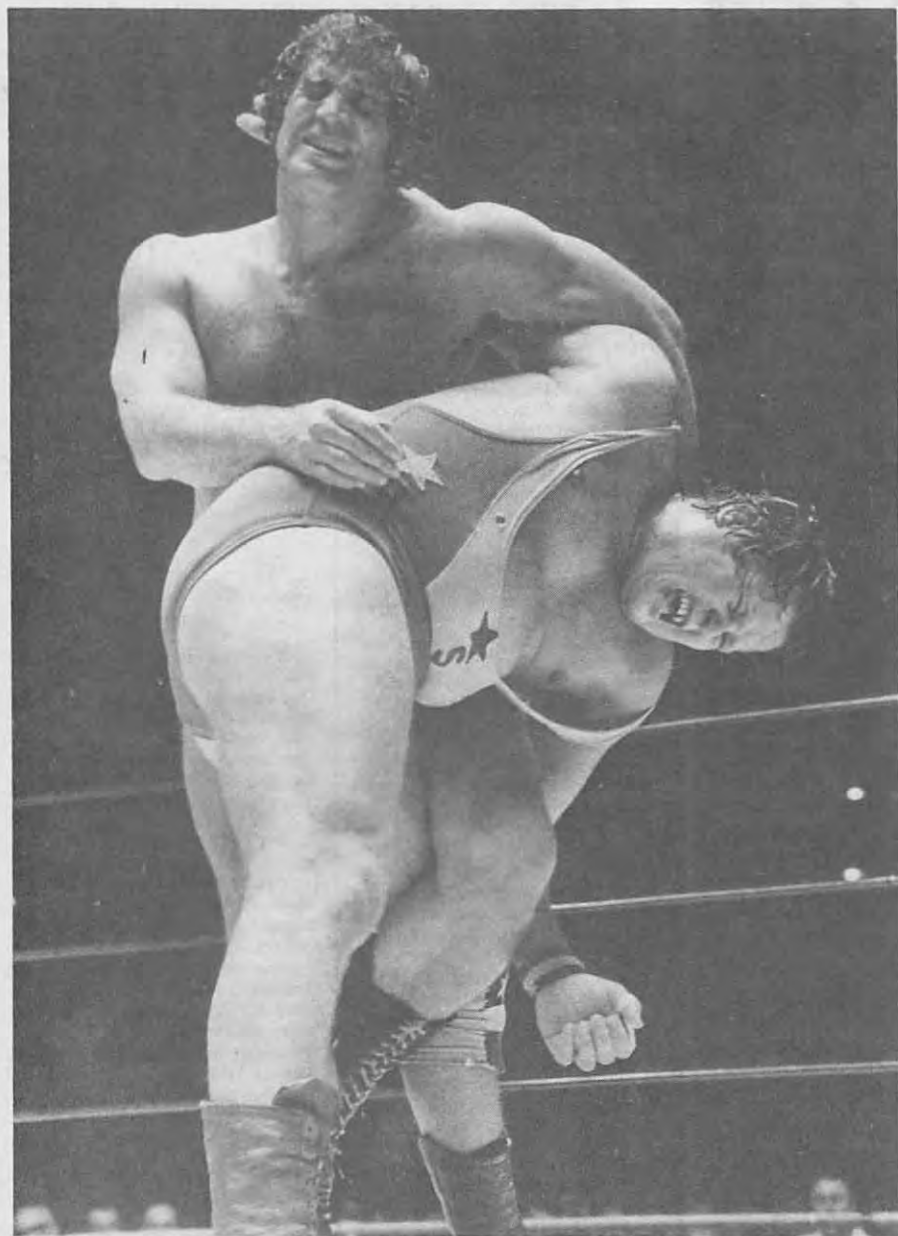
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BOB ROOP

(Continued from page 33)



A well executed abdominal stretch by Jack Brisco has Roop screaming in pain. Roop has a career that has been the subject of much controversy. It is said that if Bob wants to win a real title, he will have to change some of his habits.

to him yet he's champion. Why? Tell me how that is huh? Give me a straight, up-front answer why lesser men are champions and Bob Roop isn't."

If Roop needed proof, his clumsy match against Putski was there for analysis. Yet it wasn't a case of defeating Roop. He has reached the stage where he is his most dangerous foe.

"I think too much out there

and then suddenly, pow, my mind goes blank and all I do is act out of animalistic instincts. Then I can't do anything right.

"It's not like I don't have talent. I got that in spades, baby. But I'm completely out of my rhythm. Nothing seems fluid anymore. This match against Putski was a mistake. I should have waited. But for how long, how much longer can I wait?

"Ten years of watching inferiors win belts. Know what that does to a man's insides? Eats them away and leaves you with nothing, man, nothing but frustration."

Roop's personality certainly doesn't evoke immediate sympathy. He is a rude, obnoxious man. But despite that, we still feel a little sympathy for him. We are only human.

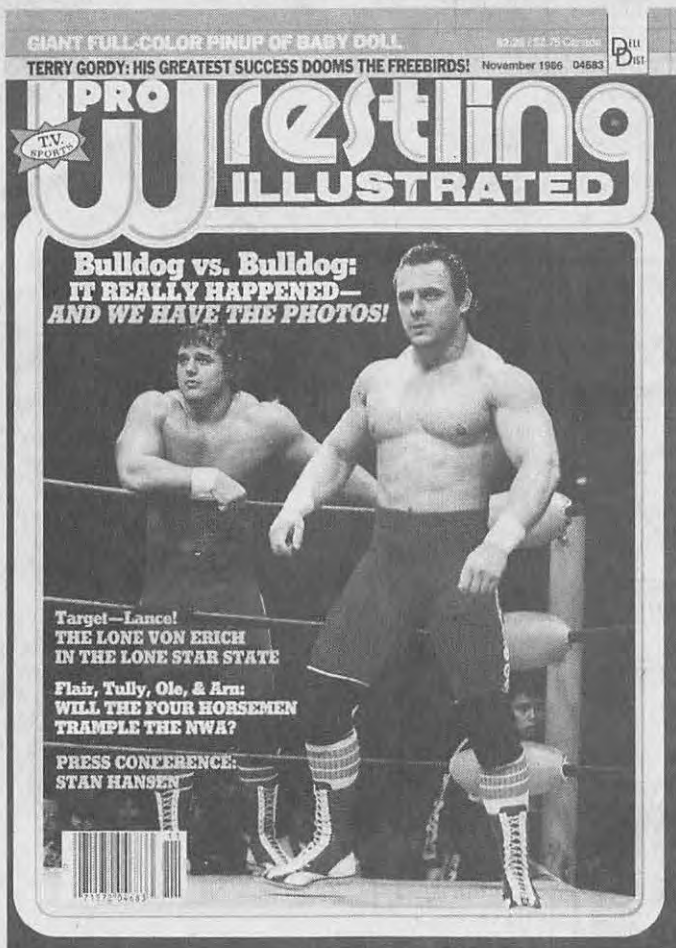


He does have skill. He does have courage, stamina and a number of formidable scientific maneuvers to complement his rulebreaking tactics. There is no logical reason why he isn't a champion. Unless . . .

Unless Bob Roop is doomed to be one of those men forever wrestling himself. Perhaps he is incapable of overcoming this flaw. He has seen the seed of panic sprouting within him. He watches helplessly as the seed grows into fright. All his actions are designed to destroy the tree, yet they only seem to spur it to greater and more stifling heights.

"Maybe I should just lock myself away for a week and think. There must be a way out of this. I know I can be champion. I know it, damnit, I know it." Bob Roop pounded his fist into his palm. □

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ANGELO MOSCA

(Continued from page 12)



He was to get no more than five minutes. On the 300th second, I would hang up.

"Where's my story?" he screamed instead of saying hello.

"What story?" I asked, noticing there were 256 seconds left.

"Angelo Mosca wins the mid-Atlantic television title," he shouted. "That story didn't appear in either THE WRESTLER or INSIDE WRESTLING! If a title isn't reported in your magazines, the winner loses at least 30% of its value. You guys are taking away money from me! Is that fair?"

"It's a lot fairer than how you won the title," I reminded him.

"Don't give me any your smart stuff, Gordon," he countered at the top of his considerable lungs. "This is no joking matter! Why doesn't the press do its job and report on my great victories. The fans love me and want to know about my every move. I'm the most exciting thing that's ever happened to this sport. And the only things stopping me from becoming the top man are slimy punks like you who

(Continued on page 60)

Above: It's typical of Mosca to doubleteam Jacky Wier with the help of Killer Kowalski. Angelo and Kowalski are a pair made in hell. Below: Angelo uses skills learned during his football days in his mat wars.



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SUPERSTARS



JULY 77



DEC 77



WINTER 78



FALL 80



FALL 81



SPRING 82



FALL 82



WINTER 82



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SUMMER 83



SUMMER 83

BEST OF THE WRESTLER



SOLD OUT



WINTER 78



SUMMER 79



SUMMER 80



FALL 80



SUMMER 81



WINTER 81



SUMMER 82



FALL 82



WINTER 82



SPRING 83



SUMMER 83

BEN STRONG



JAN 73



NOV 73

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- ☐ ANNUAL 1
- ☐ ANNUAL/Feb 80
- ☐ ANNUAL/Spr 80
- ☐ ANNUAL/Sum 80
- ☐ ANNUAL/Win 81
- ☐ ANNUAL/Spr 82
- ☐ ANNUAL/Sum 82
- ☐ ANNUAL/Fall 82
- ☐ ANNUAL/Win 82
- ☐ ANNUAL/Spr 83
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SUPERSTARS

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- ☐ Superstars/Dec 77
- ☐ Superstars/Win 78
- ☐ Superstars/Fall 80
- ☐ Superstars/Fall 81
- ☐ Superstars/Spr 82
- ☐ Superstars/Fall 82
- ☐ Superstars/Win 82
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ANGELO MOSCA

(Continued from page 58)



Above: Angelo Mosca tries to break Lou Klein's arm in an ugly match in which Mosca betrayed most of his illegal tactics.

Below: Mosca has arm raised in victory. One would think he'd be ashamed to win by cheating.

refuse to write about me. You leeches make me sick. When I'm down you'll be sucking my blood! You know where you can shove your magazines?"

I hung up the phone before Mosca could impart his instructions. Taking my watch off the desk, I noticed I owed him 18 seconds on the next phone call.

My experience is different from most of the wrestling press only in that I bothered to answer the phone at all. Mosca has managed to alienate every decent reporter in this business. From the moment he entered the sport, it was hate at first sight.

My colleague, Bill Apter, is renown for giving newcomers a break in print. When Mosca was enjoying a fairly good season, Bill sought the man out and tried to do an nice piece about him, something most rookies would give their eyeteeth for. Bill tried his best to interview the man, so he could tell the fans who this man was. Bill didn't need to do the article nearly as much as Mosca needed the publicity.



Less than 15 minutes after he went in, Apter left shaking. He'd been subjected to the vilest abuse he had ever heard. Mosca's insults were nasty in the ugliest sense of the word. When Bill played the tape of his interview back for us, we were all shocked. There was no reason for that kind of verbal attack. No reporter minds getting screamed at for writing a rough article on a wrestler; we had our say in print and he deserves to get a little back orally. Often, we'll print his reply. But to be cruelly insulted for no reason whatsoever is unforgivable.

Most reporters have stories just as bad—if not worse—about Angelo Mosca's treatment of them. A few have shown bruises, claiming they were inflicted by Mosca. I wouldn't be surprised if he comes for me after this article appears. Well, he asked why we don't cover him fully in the magazines and he does deserve an explanation.

Wrestling reporters work long and hard hours fulfilling sacred responsibilities to their readers. We do it because we believe in the sport and the right of fans to know the truth, no matter who it hurts, including ourselves. No story is written without great research and long days of tough labor. For our work we don't expect thanks, but we do demand respect.

We are not the whipping boys of emotionally stunted bullies who feel they have to see their names in the magazine. We don't go back to their dressing room because we're seeking their often dull company. We're just doing our jobs. Not giving us an interview out of spite or whatever other reason would be akin to us leaping into the ring and tripping a wrestler. We don't interfere with their job and we expect the same cooperation from them.

Angelo Mosca may be a great wrestler. He could conceivably go on to be the NWA champion. And we'll report his activities in our magazines to the best of our abilities. The fans deserve that.

But until Angelo Mosca decides to treat wrestling reporters with a modicum of respect, you won't find feature stories on him, at least not by reporters with an ounce of integrity. We're not going to grovel for any man!

I hope Angelo Mosca reads this. His skill deserves to be reported fully in this and other magazines. But until he learns how to treat the press, the press won't treat him.

If he calls me again, he can speak as long as he wants. A man Angelo's size should be big enough to apologize. □

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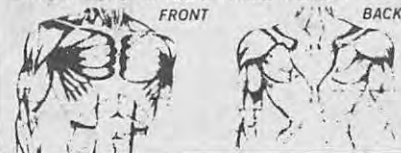
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(Continued from page 43)

He will always remember Cambridge and the cone of silence. □

INTRODUCTION

(Continued from page 6)

advice. Memo To Dusty Rhodes: If You Want The Title, Get Back To Your Roots (June 1979). Perhaps it would be a good idea for Dusty to read this story again in 1987.

John Studd has proven himself in the WWF. Ken Patera will soon prove himself again in that same area. But how many of you knew that years ago Patera and Studd formed a brutal tag team combination in the Mid-Atlantic area? *The Wrestler* covered them and wondered **Patera And Studd: An Inevitable Confrontation?** (August 1979). As it turned out, the two never wrestled each other. But times have changed, and their confrontation may yet be inevitable in the WWF.



John Studd and Ken Patera formed a brutal tag team combination in the NWA several years ago. They could team up again in the WWF in 1987.

We have long marveled at the resiliency and intelligence of NWA World champion Ric Flair. For a man with the hardest schedule in the history of professional wrestling, he is still at the top of his game. **He Bends But He Won't Break: Ric Flair Cannot Be Beaten!** (July 1986) was our tribute to a great and controversial champion.

You read it first in *The Wrestler*: **Update On Jimmy Snuka: The Superfly Will Soar Again** (August 1986). At the time of this article's publication,

(Continued on page 64)

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INTRODUCTION

(Continued from page 63)

Snuka had just signed a contract to wrestle for the AWA. Soon, he was the biggest attraction the association had seen in many years. And for those of you who saw the cold-blooded attack on Snuka by Col. DeBeers and wondered if The Superfly was permanently injured, let's repeat the title of this story: The Superfly will soar again!

Our next article takes us back to the late 1970s. It concerns two fine professional wrestlers who had also been perhaps the two finest amateur wrestlers ever. Bob Roop was an NCAA wrestling champion in college, as was Bob Backlund. But the two had very different professional careers. Backlund, considered a blue chip from the beginning, was moved intelligently and became one of the sport's finest champions ever. Roop, on the other hand, was thrown in over his head early in his career and never attained the success he should have. **The One Man Bob Roop Must Beat** (September 1978) is a tale of two wrestlers, both very different and very similar at the same time.

The strangest story of 1986 had to be Roddy Piper's conversion to fan favorite. The second strangest story of 1986 had to be Hulk Hogan's agreeing to team with The Rowdy Scot, the man who had caused The Hulkster so much suffering over the past few years. We at *The Wrestler* had our doubts about this bizarre alliance, as **Warning To Hulk Hogan: If You Trust Rowdy Roddy, You'll Pay The Piper** (December 1986) clearly shows.

Currently, both Barry Windham and Dick Murdoch are wrestling in the World Championship area. But the two men have a love-hate relationship that has intertwined both of their careers for more than half a decade. Our next story takes us back to 1981, when the unpredictable Murdoch issued this warning to the young Windham: **Dick Murdoch's Message To Barry Windham: "Don't**



Dick Murdoch elbows mashes Barry Windham on the neck. The two men have a love-hate relationship that stretches back five years.

Call Me Your Hero!" (April 1981). It was advice that Barry should have followed then—and should follow again now.

These days, wrestling fans only know Lord Al Hays as the second-banana who absorbed Vince McMahon's insults on *Wrestling TNT*. But there was a time when Hays was a great scientific wrestler—in fact, he was one of the top 10 wrestlers in the world. Then, in the early-'80s, Hays changed his philosophy completely. **Why Lord Al Hays Is A Talent Gone To Waste** (March 1981) takes you back to the time when The Lordship was not quite a bumbling fool, but was instead a very dangerous man.

1986 saw two NWA legends invade the WWF: Harley Race and Dory Funk Jr. While both men are long past their primes, they gave WWF fans a glimpse at their great talents. What many longtime WWF fans may not know, however, is that Race and Funk battled each other for nearly two decades. **Dory Funk Jr.'s Relentless Hunt Of Harley Race** (December 1978) takes you to the midpoint of their career-long feud.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Wrestler Annual*. We'll be back again in mid-April with our next issue. See you then. □

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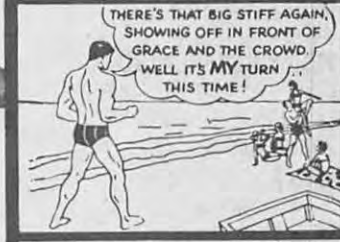
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OFFICIAL WRESTLING

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings, as well as top 10 Women ratings, are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board.



Nikita Koloff

TOP 10

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
NWA World champion
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**HULK HOGAN**
WWF World champion
302, Venice Beach, CA
- 3—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
U.S. heavyweight champion
275, Moscow, Russia
- 4—**RANDY SAVAGE**
WWF Intercontinental champion
245, Sarasota, FL
- 5—**LEX LUGER**
Southern champion
268, Chicago, IL
- 6—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
World Class champion
239, Denton, TX
- 7—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
AWA World champion
245, Beverly Hills, CA
- 8—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
No. 1 contender: WWF title
253, Brandon, FL
- 9—**DUSTY RHODES**
No. 2 contender: NWA title
302, Austin, TX
- 10—**JAKE ROBERTS**
No. 1 contender: WWF I-C title
246, Stone Mountain, GA

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
NWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 453 pounds
- 2—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
No. 2 contenders to NWA tag team title
Combined weight: 567 pounds
- 3—**THE BRITISH BULLDOGS**
WWF World tag team champions
Combined weight: 461 pounds
- 4—**THE FANTASTICS**
No. 1 contenders to UWF tag team title
Combined weight: 462 pounds
- 5—**OLE & ARN ANDERSON**
No. 1 contenders to NWA tag team title
Combined weight: 505 pounds
- 6—**PLAYBOY BUDDY ROSE & DOUG SOMERS**
AWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 515 pounds
- 7—**THE MIDNIGHT ROCKERS**
No. 1 contenders to AWA tag team title
Combined weight: 461 pounds
- 8—**THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS**
No. 3 contenders to NWA tag team title
Combined weight: 472 pounds
- 9—**LANCE VON ERICH & DINGO WARRIOR**
World Class tag team champions
Combined weight: 513 pounds
- 10—**LEROY BROWN & BILL IRWIN**
UWF tag team champions
Combined weight: 717 pounds

NWA, AWA, and WWF ratings, in addition to regional ratings from around the country, are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category. (Certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.)

NWA

World Champion:

RIC FLAIR

243, Minneapolis, MN

- 1—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 2—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 3—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 4—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 5—**ARN ANDERSON**
249, Minneapolis, MN
- 6—**SAM HOUSTON**
222, Waco, TX
- 7—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 8—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**
226, Marietta, GA
- 9—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
- 10—**RIP OLIVER**
245, Tampa, FL

AWA

World Champion:

NICK BOCKWINKEL

245, Beverly Hills, CA

- 1—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2—**COL. DeBEERS**
265, Cape Town, South Africa
- 3—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 4—**JOHNNY RICH**
238, Hendersonville, TN
- 5—**BORIS ZUKHOV**
254, Leningrad, Russia
- 6—**BRAD RHEINGANS**
284, Albuquerque, NM
- 7—**SILLO SAM**
461, Baltimore, MD
- 8—**KEN TIMBS**
235, Atlanta, GA
- 9—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN
- 10—**NINJA GO**
238, Japan

WWF

World Champion:

HULK HOGAN

302, Venice Beach, CA

- 1—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 2—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
- 3—**JAKE ROBERTS**
246, Stone Mountain, GA
- 4—**HERCULES HERNANDEZ**
275, Tampa, FL
- 5—**RODDY PIPER**
231, Glasgow, Scotland
- 6—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Toluca, Mexico
- 7—**MAGNIFICENT MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HI
- 8—**HARLEY RACE**
255, Kansas City, MO
- 9—**DICK SLATER**
247, Pittsburgh, PA
- 10—**BILLY JACK HAYNES**
245, Portland, OR

WOMEN

1—**SHERRI MARTEL**

AWA Women's champion
132, New Orleans, LA

- 2—**MISTY BLUE SIMMES**
U.S. & IWF Women's champion
118, Glens Falls, NY
- 3—**WENDI RICHTER**
WWC Women's champion
142, Dallas, TX
- 4—**FABULOUS MOOLAH**
WWF Women's champion
138, Columbia, SC
- 5—**LELANI KAI**
All Pacific Women's champion
127, Honolulu, HI
- 6—**LINDA DALLAS**
No. 1 contender: U.S. & IWF title
109, Dallas, TX
- 7—**KAT LeROUX**
No. 2 contender: U.S. & IWF title
120, New Orleans, LA
- 8—**CANDI DIVINE**
No. 1 contender: AWA title
127, Nashville, TN
- 9—**VELVET McINTYRE**
No. 1 contender: WWF title
135, Dublin, Ireland
- 10—**PENNY MITCHELL**
No. 2 contender: WWF title
141, Crane, Missouri

CIAL G RATINGS

WORLD CHAMP.

- 1—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 2—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 3—**ARN ANDERSON**
249, Minneapolis, MN
- 4—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 5—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**
226, Marietta, GA
- 6—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 7—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 8—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
- 9—**KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV**
303, Thief River Falls, MN
- 10—**IVAN KOLOFF**
257, Moscow, Russia

UWF

- 1—**ONE MAN GANG**
468, Chicago, IL
- 2—**TERRY GORDY**
289, Chattanooga, TN
- 3—**TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
- 4—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
- 5—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA
- 6—**SAVANNAH JACK**
246, Savannah, GA
- 7—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Tulsa, OK
- 8—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
- 9—**STING**
270, parts unknown
- 10—**BUDDY ROBERTS**
247, Del City, OK

WORLD CLASS

- 1—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
- 2—**BUZZ SAWYER**
240, St. Petersburg, FL
- 3—**LANCE VON ERICH**
260, Arlington, TX
- 4—**BRIAN ADIAS**
238, Denton, TX
- 5—**CRUSHER YURKOF**
390, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 6—**DINGO WARRIOR**
280, Queens, NY
- 7—**STEVE SIMPSON**
230, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 8—**MIKE VON ERICH**
221, Denton, TX
- 9—**ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
360, Sudan
- 10—**AL MADRIL**
235, Los Angeles, CA

FLORIDA

- 1—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 2—**KAREEM MUHAMMAD**
297, Africa
- 3—**HACKSAW HIGGINS**
320, Buffalo, NY
- 4—**KENDALL WINDHAM**
220, Sweetwater, TX
- 5—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 6—**BAD NEWS ALLEN**
280, New York, NY
- 7—**ED GANTNER**
269, Tampa, FL
- 8—**RON SIMMONS**
260, Perry, GA
- 9—**DEWEY FORTE**
297, Tampa, FL
- 10—**THE FALCON**
250, parts unknown

Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices.

MID-SOUTHERN

- 1—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 2—**BIG BUBBA**
407, San Antonio, TX
- 3—**TOMMY RICH**
232, Hendersonville, TN
- 4—**TRACY SMOTHERS**
236, Atlanta, GA
- 5—**AIKO SATO**
238, Tokyo, Japan
- 6—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
- 7—**HILLBILLY ELMER**
406, Philadelphia, MS
- 8—**JONATHAN BOYD**
287, New Zealand
- 9—**JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 10—**BOY TONY**
231, St. Louis, MO

CONTINENTAL

- 1—**RIP ROGERS**
238, Atlanta, GA
- 2—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
235, Boston, MA
- 3—**EXOTIC ADRIAN STREET**
227, South Wales
- 4—**JERRY STUBBS**
235, Pensacola, FL
- 5—**TOM PRITCHARD**
220, Houston, TX
- 6—**THE BULLET**
234, parts unknown
- 7—**TONY ANTHONY**
248, New Orleans, LA
- 8—**STEVE ARMSTRONG**
234, Marietta, GA
- 9—**JIMMY GOLDEN**
234, Montgomery, AL
- 10—**ROBERT FULLER**
238, Dyresburg, TN

MOST POPULAR

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 3—**RODDY PIPER**
231, Glasgow, Scotland
- 4—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 5—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 6—**LANCE VON ERICH**
260, Arlington, TX
- 7—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 8—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
- 9—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 10—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN

MOST HATED

- 1—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 2—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 3—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
- 4—**COL. DeBEERS**
265, Cape Town, South Africa
- 5—**BRIAN ADIAS**
238, Denton, TX
- 6—**JAKE ROBERTS**
246, Stone Mountain, GA
- 7—**EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 8—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 9—**ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
360, Sudan
- 10—**TERRY GORDY**
289, Chattanooga, TN

For period ended December 2, 1986

RATINGS ANALYSIS

This column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Ratings mailbag: Interestingly, the volume of mail for "Ratings Analysis" is consistently more than the mail for any other feature in this magazine. It's been piling up quickly during this holiday season, so it's time to forge through the mail and respond to some of your comments and questions.

• *From Chris Siggia, Erie, Pennsylvania:* "I have some questions, complaints, and suggestions for your ratings. I'll start with the Top 10. How on earth can **Nick Bockwinkel** be rated sixth (in your January 1987 edition)? First, he was just given the title, and now he's been getting pinned in non-title matches by **Col. DeBeers** and **Nord the Barbarian**. There aren't even any proven wrestlers in the area except **Jimmy Snuka** and **Larry Zbyszko**. I guess the real question is how you can even say that Bockwinkel is a world champion. Also, if DeBeers and Nord have been pinning



Nick Bockwinkel

Bockwinkel in non-title matches, how can you rate Zbyszko and Scott Hall ahead of them? Is it because they're getting more title matches or what? We need an explanation!

"My next complaint is this business of rule-breakers turning fan favorite. What I mean by this is **Roddy Piper** getting a number three rating in the WWF so quickly after his return. I don't actually believe

he wrestled enough and defeated enough opponents to be rated number three in so short a time. You did the same thing with **Lex Luger**. When he was a rulebreaker, just before he turned clean, I felt he should have been rated in the Top 10. He wasn't, and you even went so far as to say he shouldn't be in the Top 10 because he is still young and inexperienced. As soon as you saw he turned fan favorite (only one month after you said he's too young and inexperienced to be rated in the Top 10), you rated him in the Top 10.

My biggest complaint: After a year of waiting for you to drop the Continental or Mid-Southern ratings, you drop Pacific Northwest ratings and add women's ratings! This is a disgrace. The PNW has spawned a lot of today's major stars. You could have used the extra space to rate the top 15 in the major areas, but no, you stick in women. A disgrace!"

[We'll take your complaints in turn, Chris. First of all,

where the AWA ratings are concerned, Bockwinkel has gotten back on the track in his title matches. The pinfalls in non-title matches you refer to took place prior to the ratings period you discuss. Also, we feel that rating Bockwinkel sixth actually penalizes him. Many fans feel that Bockwinkel should automatically be rated number three, by virtue of his AWA World title. As for how we can say Bockwinkel is a world champion—well, he is, like it or not. And unless the AWA folds tomorrow, the title will continue to be regarded as the third world title in the sport.

[Regarding your point on fan favorites: Lex Luger had been rated in the Top 10 as early as our September 1986 issue, and prior to that had long been a fixture in the NWA ratings.



Lex Luger

As for Roddy Piper, it was determined by the ratings committee that his performance in the WWF since his return, particularly when taken in context of the quality of the records of those wrestlers rated below him, warranted his high rating.

[As far as our adding the Top 10 women ratings, we're sorry you don't like them, Chris. For the most part, reaction from our readers has been overwhelmingly positive.]

• *From Jim Carey of Boston:* "I read *The Wrestler* every month, and I always enjoy the in-depth coverage of the wrestling scene that it provides. In your ratings, it explains that the magazine's editorial board chooses the Top 10 singles and tag team rankings. I would like to know if there is a specific system you follow each month by which you determine these ratings."

[Not really, Jim, our "system" changes from month to month. Sometimes, when there's general agreement on the ratings, the ratings meeting lasts less than half an hour; these are rare, however. In most cases, the ratings committee meetings are screamfests lasting several hours, generally revolving around changes that must be made in the wake of major title changes. Occasionally, an impasse among the editors will be reached. When that happens, a closed ballot will be held, with each editor placing a sealed Top 10 ratings in a box, and a point value placed on each rating. The box is opened, the ratings correlated, and the top 10 arrived at.]

The address for mail: Want to know how things are done around here? So do we; write and tell us. Address all your mail to: "Ratings Analysis" c/o *Wrestler Annual*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

THIS MONTH IN...



THE Wrestler



IVAN KOLOFF and **KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV** have their Kremlin orders: Crush **NIKITA KOLOFF'S** Russian revolution!



A look at the war between **RANDY SAVAGE** and **RICK STEAMBOAT**—Has The Macho Man slain The Dragon?

PLUS . . .

UWF uproar—**ONE MAN GANG** does not deserve to be champion! . . . **BARRY WINDHAM** says, "Don't expect me to be another **MAGNUM T.A.**" . . . Was **BRIAN ADIAS** justified in turning against the **VON ERICHS**? . . . An exclusive interview with **JIMMY SNUKA**

All this and much more . . .
in the March 1987 issue of
The Wrestler

ON SALE NOW!

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED



It's a superpower summit as **DUSTY RHODES** joins forces with **NIKITA KOLOFF!**



A shocking story by **COL. DeBEERS** explains how the South African "meant to kill **JIMMY SNUKA!**"

PLUS . . .

A full-color pinup and biography of **LEX LUGAR** . . . The fans demand: It's time for a WWF housecleaning! . . . **TED DiBIASE** says he's "tired of being the UWF's whipping boy!" . . . An exclusive "Press Conference" with **DINGO WARRIOR** . . . In-depth "Scouting Reports" of six top stars

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ON SALE JANUARY 20

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1st person story by Tedd Mainwaring

"I worked on an oil drilling crew out west. We drilled 11 wells one year, every one a gusher! But did I strike it rich? Not on your life—I was paid by the hour and struggled to feed a growing family. That started me to thinking, 'Why should I do all the work while someone else gets all the gravy.'

"About that time I got injured and ended up having to move my family to a different area to take a job as a maintenance mechanic. That idea of controlling my own destiny kept gnawing at me. By now I had five children with extra expense of about \$2,400 a year sending the oldest one to a speech and hearing center.

"How could a guy like me save up enough money to start my own business? To get into most businesses you have to own a corner of Fort Knox. If I could only ease into a business without giving up the regular salary I had to count on to put food on the table. And without making any investment. As long as I was dreaming, wouldn't it be great to find something where every single spare time order could bring in *really big* extra money.

"Sound like the impossible dream? Well, I had seen a Pace Products story about a man who earned \$4,154.65 on just one Seamless Spray order. And he didn't have to invest a penny. I sent for the free information. Believe me, when I received their literature and saw how easy their field-tested sales kit made everything—I knew it could all be more than just a dream. I decided to become a Pace distributor. And it was the best decision I ever made.

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"Pace ships the Pace Seamless Spray equipment on Free Loan. The customer pays only for the roofing products from Pace. His own men apply it. And the clincher—I would get my big commissions up front. Paid in advance. Weekly.

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it is to set up a business and keep it running profitably. So all I had to do was go out and find somebody with a leaky roof, and tell him about Pace products.

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"That school building is now leak-free for the first time in 25 years, so they had me do five other roofs with Pace's Seamless Spray. I was on my way. Today my family and I are enjoying a life we never thought possible before—all thanks to my accepting Pace's invitation to return that little coupon in the ad I read."

Tedd Mainwaring

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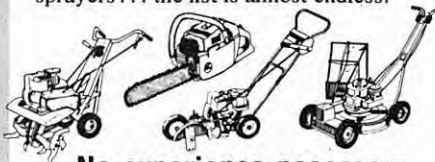
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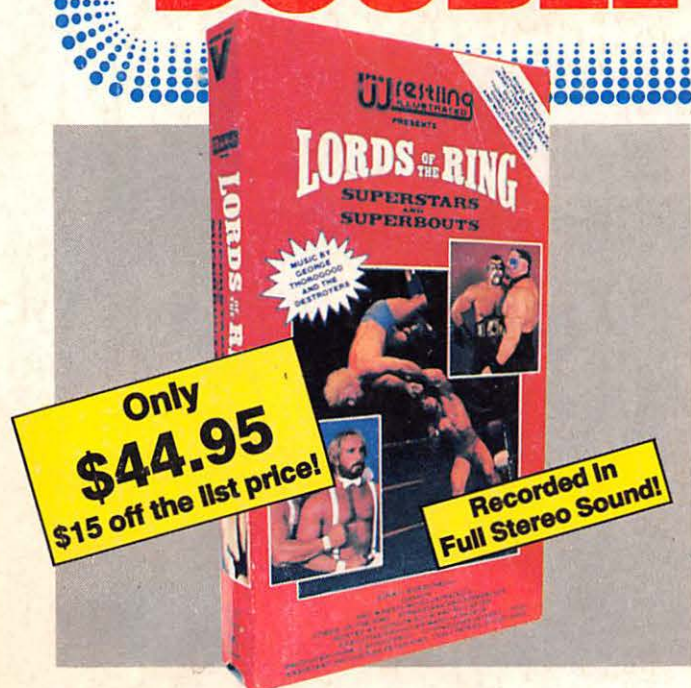
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